GOD'S ANGER, AND MAN'S COMFORT.

TWO

SERMONS,

Preached and Published

BY

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LONDON,

Printed by *Tho. Maxey*, for SAMUEL MAN, at the signe of the SWAN in *Paul's* Church-yard, 1652.

TO
The Moſt HONOURABLE,
and CHARITABLE
BENEFACTORS,

Whom God hath honoured for his Almoners,
And, Sanctified to be his Diſpenſers
of the fruits of Charity and Mercy
To Mee,
In this my neceſſitous and decrepit Old age, ✶

I humbly PRESENT
This Teſtimony of my Thankfulneſſe:

WITH
My inceſſant Apprecations to the Father of all Mercies,
to reward them for it in this life, and to crown
their Souls with everlaſting Joy and
Glory, in the life to come,

Through JESUS CHRIST *our Lord.*
Amen.

THO. ADAMS.

GOD'S ANGER.

PSALM 80. ver. 4.

O Lord God of hoſtes, how long wilt thou be angry with thy people that prayeth?

IT hath been ſaid of Warre, that it is *Malum*, an evill, but it may be *Neceſſarium*, a neceſſary evill. It is good ſometimes to hunt the Wolfe, though it is better to fodder the Sheep. They ſpeake of a drowning man, *Etiam ad Novaculam*, that he will rather take hold of a knife, then of nothing. A very coward will catch the edge of a naked ſword, to ſave his life; though it cut his fingers. Man being caſt out of Paradiſe, and that Paradiſe guarded with a ſword in the hand of a Cherub, durſt not attempt a re-entry, becauſe he was guilty. But Commonwealths that have loſt any part of their Territories, or juſt Priviledges, by forraign invaſion, and hoſtile vi-

olence, may justly venture upon the sword, and fairly hope for a recovery, because they are innocent; *& hanc picem amolire gladio. Irene* signifies *Peace*; Yet the Turke could sacrifice his beuteous *Irene* to the God of Warr. If Warr in it self were utterly unlawfull, God would never have accepted this Title, *The Lord of hostes*. Yet in this stile he takes such delight, that he is oftner called *the God of hoasts* in the former Testament, then by any other Title. In those two propheſies of *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, it is given him no lesse then an hundred and thirty times.

All creatures are mustered, and trained, put into garison, or brought forth into the field by his command. Which way can we look besides his Armies? If upward into heaven, there
[a] Luk. 2. 13. is a band of Souldiers; *even a* [a] *multitude of the heavenly host praising God.* If to the lower heavens, there are a band of Souldiers: it
[b] Gen. 2. 1. [b] was *universa militia cœli*, to which those Idolaters burnt incense. On the earth, not only men are martialled to his service; so *Israel* was called *the host of the living God*: but even the brute Creatures are ranged in arrayes. So God did levy a band of flyes against the Egyptians; and a band of frogs that marched into
[c] Pso. 30. 37. their bedchambers. He [c] hath troops of *locusts*, and armies of *caterpillers*. Not only the chariots and horsemen of heaven, to defend his Prophet, but even the basest, the most indocible, and despicable creatures, wherewith to confound his enemies. If *Goliah* stalke forth to defile the

God

God of *Israel*, he shall be confuted with a pebble. If *Herod* swells up to a God, God will set his vermine upon him, and all the Kings guard cannot save him from them. You have heard of rats that could not be beaten off, till they had destroyed that covetous Prelate, and of a flie that killed Pope *Adrian*. God hath more ways to punish, then hee hath creatures.

This *Lord God of hostes* is not properly a title of Creation, but of providence. All creatures have their existence from God, as their Maker: and so have they also their order from him, as their Governour. It referrs not so much to their being, as to their martialling; not to their naturall, but militant estate: Not only as creatures do they owe him for their making, but as they are souldiers, for their managing. Their order is Warlike, and they serve under the colours of the Almighty. So that here, God would be respected, not as a Creator; but as a Generall. His anger therefore seems so much the more fearfull, as it is presented to us under so great a Title; *The Lord God of hostes is angry*. They talke of *Tamberlain*, that hee could daunt his enemies, with the very look of his countenance: oh then what terrour dwells in the countenance of an offended God? The reprobates shall call to the rocks to hide them [d] *from the wrath of the Lamb*: If *Ira Agni*, the wrath of the *Lamb* doth so affright them, how terrible is *Ira Leonis*, the wrath of the Lyon? It may justly trouble us all to hear, that *the*

[d] Rev. 6. 16.

Lord God of hoſtes is angry: in the ſenſe whereof the Prophet breaks forth here into this expoſtulation; *O Lord God of hoſtes, how long wilt thou be angry with thy people that prayeth?* Wherein we have theſe five propoſitions, or inferencies naturally ariſing out of the text.

1. That God may bee *angry*; for that is manifeſtly implyed in the Text; He is *angry*.

2. That his *anger* may laſt a great while: *O Lord, how long wilt thou be angry?*

3. That his anger may extend to the whole nation: *how long wilt thou be angry with the people*, all the people

4. That his anger may fall upon his owne people, even his peculiar and choſen flock; *How long wilt thou be angry with thy people?*

5. That his anger may dwel upon them in their devotions, and not be removed by their very prayers. *How long wilt thou be angry with the people that prayeth?* Yea, *againſt their prayer?*

Now God is never angry without a cauſe: he is no froward God, of no techy and pettiſh nature: a cauſe there muſt be, or he would never be angry. There can be no cauſe but ſin; we never read that God was angry for any thing elſe. Some he hath corrected without reſpect unto ſin, as he did *Job*: but he was never angry with any man, but for the ſin of that man. It is the ſin of the people that hath thus grieved God, and it is the anger of God that hath thus

thus grieved the people. Sin must be supposed to run along with his anger throughout the text, as the eclyptick line does thorow the Zodiake.

1. If it were not for sin, God would not be *angry*.

2. If it were not for the continuance of sin, he would not be so *long angry*.

3. If it were not for the universality of sinne, he would not be *angry with the whole people*.

4. If it were not for the unnaturall ingratitude of sinne, he would not be *angry with his own people*.

5. If it were not for the base hypocrisie of sin, he would not be *angry with his people that prayeth*.

Thus then the argument lies fair and plain before us.

1 It is sin that makes *God angry*.

2 It is the continuance of sin that makes him *long angry*.

3 It is the generalty of sin that makes him *angry with the whole people*.

4. It is the unthankfulness of sin, or the sin of unthankfulnesse, that makes him *angry with his owne people*.

5. Lastly, it is the hypocrisie of sin, or the sin of hypocrisie, that makes him so *long angry with his people that prayeth*.

1. We provoke him by our rebellions, and he is angry.

2. We

2. We continue our provocations against him, and he is *long angry.*

3. Wee provoke him universally, and so he is *angry* with us all; not with some offenders here and there, but *with the whole people.*

4. We provoke him by our unkindnesse; for whom he hath done so much good, and upon whom hee hath heaped so many blessings; and so hee is *angry with his own people.*

5. Lastly, we provoke him by our dissimulations; approaching to him with our lips, and keeping back our hearts: we pray unto him, and yet live against him: we call upon his Name, and rebell against his will: and so he is angry, and *long* angry, and long angry *with the whole* people, and long angry *with his own people*, and long angry with his people *that prayeth.*

1. God may be *angry*, and sin is the cause of his anger; thats the first Proposition. Man may be angry without sin, not without perturbation: God is angry without either preturbation or sin. His anger is in his nature, not by anthropopathie, but properly; being his corrective Justice, or vindicative Justice. *Iratus videtur, quia tanquam iratus operatur.* Our anger is an impotent passion: His a most clear, free, and just operation. By this affection in our selves, wee may guesse at the perfection that is in God. The dissolute securitans think that God doth but smile at the absurdities of men; that *ludit in humanis*: that their drunkennesse and adulteries rather

ther make him merry then angry. Like some carnall father, that laughs at the ridiculous behaviour of his children; to whom their wanton speeches and actions are but a pleasure; and in which he rather encourageth, then chides. [e] Indeed, God is said to Laugh; *He that sits in heaven laughs them to scorn*: but woe be to the men at whose fooleries God laughs. It is a dissembling falshood in man, to smile and betray, as *Judas* began his trechery with a kisse: Such are likened to those bottled windy drinks, that laugh in a mans face, and cut his throat. But this laughter in God, argues not so much what he does, as what they suffer; when by frustrating their sinfull purposes, he exposeth them to contempt and scorne. *Dei ridere, est hominem ludibrio exponere.* If a little ant creeping out of a molehill, should march forth, and proffer to wrastle a fall with a gyant, there were yet some proportion in this challenge: but there is none of a finite power to an infinite. Audacious sinners, that dare provoke the Lord of hostes! What are all the Armies and Forces of Tyrants, to oppose the omnipotent God? [f] He will make a feast of them, for the fowles of the Aire, whom he invites to the flesh of Captains, and to the flesh of Kings. Let earth and hell conspire, let there be a confederate band of men and divels; how easily can he command the one to their dust, the other to their chains? What power have they of either motion or being, but from him against whom they fight? Our God is

[e] Psal. 2. 4.

[f] Rev. 19. 18.

is a consuming fire; and he will consume them not only in anger, but in laughter. The Catastrophe of all rebellion is but the *Sarcasmos* or bitter scorn of God.

There is no lesse difference between Gods *anger* and his favour, then between death and life; death in the most dismall horrour; and life in the most comfortable sweetnesse of it. [g] *In his favour there is life:* death in his anger; [h] *for when thou art angry, all our days are gone.* There is great light given to contraries by their comparison: look first a little upon the favour of God: [i] *Oh how excellent is thy loving kindnesse, O Lord?* Thy Saints *shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatnesse of thy house, and thou wilt make them to drink of the river of thy pleasures.* What followes upon his favour, but satisfaction, and peace, and joy, and eternall life? When the deluge of water had defaced that great book of Nature, *Noah* had a copy of every kind of Creature with him in that famous Library, the Arke: out of which they were reprinted to the world. So he that hath the favour of God in the Arke of the Covenant, hath the Originall copy of all blessings: if they could all have perished, yet so they might be restor'd. God is the best Store-house, the best treasury: O happy men that have their estates laid up there! Though friends, goods, and life forsake us, yet if Gods gracious countenance shine upon us, that wil be life, and goods, and friends unto us. These benefits and comforts flow from his favour.

[g] Psa 30.5.
[h] Ps.90.9.
[i] Ps.36.7.

But

But alas, how terrible is his *anger*? He hath scourged some in very mercy, till they have smarted under his rod. *Job* complaines, that *the terrours of God do fight against him.* And *David* says, *From my youth up thy terrours have I suffered with a troubled mind.* If he will do thus much in love, what shall be the judgments of his *wrath*! If he hath drawn blood of his dear ones, what shall be the plague of wilfull sinners! If this be the rod of his children, what are the scorpions provided for his enemies! what comfort can any find in all the prosperous fortunes upon earth, with whom God is angry in Heaven? If that mighty Pagan could apprehend this, he would finde small safety in his guard of Janisaries, and lesse pleasure in his brutish Seraglio's. It is a vain conceit of that Potentate, who refusing the name of *Pius*, would be called *Felix*; Happy, not Godly. But there can bee no felicity without Gods blessing, and he will not blesse, where he is not blessed. But *Sylla*, sirnamed *Felix*, accounted it not the least part of his fortunes, that *Metellus* sirnamed *Pius* was his friend. *Piety* is the best friend to *Felicity*, though *Felicity* doth not alwayes befriend *Piety*.

Job. 6. 4.
Ps. 88. 15. 16.

That is but a wretched prosperity, upon which God looks in *anger*. If the Sun were wanting, it would be night for all the Starrs: If God frown upon a man; for all the glittering honors of this world, he sits in the shadow of death. Let him bee never so rich in lands and waters; yet his

ſprings have loſt their ſweetneſſe, his vines their fruitfulneſſe, his gold hath loſt the colour, his precious ſtones their value and luſtre: I mean, the vertue and comfort of all theſe are gone away with the favour of God. If our houſe were paved with a floor of gold, and walled with pearls and Diamonds, and yet the roof wide open to the violence of heaven, would theſe ſhelter us from ſtorms and tempeſt? Would we be ſo lodged in cold winter nights? Or were our houſe roofed with Cedar, and the walls hung with arras, yet if the floore be rotten, and under it a bottomleſſe pit, could we ſleep in quiet? There can be no ſafety when God is *angry*: his wrath may come thundring from heaven, and ſuddenly ſink rebellious ſinners into hell; and then where is all their honour? When their mortall part lies in the diſhonourable duſt, and their immortall part ſuffers in unextinguiſhable fire.

Thus terrible is the *anger* of God; now what is he *angry* withall, but ſinne? That is the perpetuall make-bate betwixt God and us; the fuel of the fire of his indignation. Isa. 59. 2. *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God.* For this cauſe he looks upon us as a ſtranger, yea as an enemy. Isa. 63. 10. *But they rebelled, and vexed his holy ſpirit: therefore he was turned to be their Enemy, and he fought againſt them.* *But* they rebelled: mans occaſion of offending God, is but a *But*, a nothing, no cauſe at all: Gods occaſion of being *angry* with men, is a *therefore*, a cauſe ſufficient, and that cauſe is ſin. Search the holy Book all over, and

you

you shall never find God *angry* but for sinne. Nor doth the flame of his wrath break out upon every sin; but when sin grows impudent and past shame. We were wont to say, that *veritas non quærit angulos*: but now, *vitium non quærit angulos*: It doth that in a bravery, with which the false Prophet was threatned, that he should do in fear; [a] *it runs from Chamber to Chamber*, from house to house, not to *hide it self*, but to boast it self. We so provoke the Lord, that we do not only anger him, but are angry with him. If the winds do not blow, and the raine fall, as wee would have it; if any thing falls out crosse to our desires, we even vexe at God himself; as if he were bound to wait upon our humours. No marvell if *God be angry with us*, when we dare be angry with him: by murmuring at his actions, and calling his providence into question. [b] *Doest thou well to be angry*, O man? No, it is exceeding ill, and dangerous. We may tremble to think that the pot should fall out with the potter, and man be angry with his Maker. It is the meretricious and shameless forehead of sinne that angers God. And in this anger wee here finde him, but let us not so leave him: and yet the next point tells us that his wrath is not suddenly pacified.

2. He may *be long angry*: that's the second Proposition. *Usque quo Domine?* It is not for a fit, like some flash of powder, but may burne long. [c] *How long, O Lord, wilt thou be angry? for ever? And shall thy Jealousie burne like fire?* [d] He visits his own Israel with a long dearth:

[a] 1 King. 22. 25.

[b] Jon. 4. 4.

[c] Psal. 79. 5.

[d] 2 Sam. 21. 1.

During all thoſe three years of drought and ſcarctiy, Gods Altar ſmoaked with daily ſacrifices, and Heaven was ſolicited with continuall prayers; yet ſtill he was *angry*: and why may not David complaine, in this Pſalme, of that famine? Wee are not at the firſt ſenſible of common evills: in Warr, Dearth, or Peſtilence, wee thinke onely of ſhifting for our ſelves, or finding out convenient refuges, (like Foxes in a ſtorm, that runne to the next burroughs) and ſtudy not how to remove the publick Judgements. But the continuance of an affliction ſends us to God, and calls upon us to ask for a reckoning. An evil that is ſuddenly gone, is as ſuddenly forgotten: as men ſtrucken in their ſleep, cannot quickly find themſelves: ſo the blow doth rather aſtoniſh us, then teach us. But when the burden lies *long* upon us, we will at laſt complaine of the weight, and ſeek to eaſe our ſelves.

Indeed, there be ſome ſinners more inſenſible, more inſenſate then beaſts: if we finde the hungryeſt ox feeding in the meddow, and cannot with many pricks of the goad make him remove from his place, we wonder at his ſtupiditie. Yet the inſatiate world-affecters, though God not only affright them with menaces, but even afflict them with many ſcourges, cannot be gotten from their covetous practiſes. So long as they can by any means grow wealthy, they will not beleeve that God is *angry* with them. As if there were none [e] *that have more then heart could wiſh*; yet live all this while in the ſphere of Gods Indignation. We

[e] Pſa. 73. 7.

can

can read Gods wrath in a ſtorme, not in a calme: yet he may be moſt *angry*, when he leaſt expreſſeth it. [e] *My Jealouſie ſhall depart from thee, and I will be no more angry with thee:* Oh that is the height of his diſpleaſure! [f] The Prophet ſpeaks of a true *Peace: True*, were a needleſſe epithet, if there were not a falſe peace in carnall hearts. How fondly doth the ſecure ſinner flatter himſelfe, in the conceit of his own happineſſe? All is well at home: he quarrels not with himſelfe, for he denies himſelfe no ſenſuall pleaſure. God quarrells not with him, he feels no checks of a chiding conſcience, he ſees no frowns of an angry Judge: nothing but proſperity ſhines upon him. He ſees no difference in the face of heaven, whatſoever he does, or ſays: the ſame entertainment is given to his blaſphemies, as to his prayers. Sure, he thinks himſelf in Gods books above other men. And ſo he is indeed; in Gods book of debts, in Gods book of arrerages, in his book of Judgments: ſo he is farr in Gods books. He owes ſuch men a payment, and they ſhall have it. Alas, this is not the ſinners peace, but ſtupidity: not the Makers favour, but his fury. All this while he is very *angry*, though he ſuſpends the execution of his wrath. Thus *long* ſin lies like a ſleeping bandog at the door of their hearts: They look upon the cur as if he would never wake: or if he did, yet as if he were ſo chained, & clogged, & muzled, that he could never hurt them. But when once God rowzeth him, then have at their throats: then they ſhall feel what it is to have lived ſo *long* in the anger of

[e] Ezek. 16. 42.

[f] Jer. 14. 13.

a God: When the Almighty ſhall put himſelf into the fearfull formes of vengeance, and the everlaſting gulph of fire ſhal open to receive them into intolerable burnings; the mercileſſe divels ſeiſing on their guilty ſouls, and afflicting them with inceſſant torments.

It is ſome favour, when we have the reſpite to cry, *How long, Lord, wilt thou be angry with us?* He is not throughly *angry* with us, when he ſuffers us to breath forth this expoſtulation. There is ſome hope of remedy, when we once complain of our ſickneſſe. It is not change of climate, but change of dyet, that recovers us: when we grow to forbear the ſurfets of ſin, there is a fair poſſibility of comfort. Yet God may be *long angry*, and *long* continue ſenſible teſtimonies of his anger. [h] *Forty years long was I grieved with this Generation.* He had ſmitten *Iſrael* with divers puniſhments, and threatned them with with more grievous calamities; *that* [i] *every man ſhould eat the fleſh of his own arme*; *Manaſſeh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manaſſeh*; *and they both againſt Judah*: And yet he had not done with them, *his anger was not turned away, but his hand was ſtretched out ſtill.* *Davids* peſtilence of three dayes, was a ſtorm ſoone blown over, though it were bitter for the time: Gods diſpleaſure hath dwelt longer upon us.

[h] Pſ 92.10.

[i] Pſ.9.17.21.

But how then doth the Prophet ſay, *that he retaineth not* anger? Well enough: for he never retaineth it one moment longer, then we retaine the cauſe of it: So ſoon as ever we ceaſe ſinning

againſt

againſt him, he ceaſeth to be *angry* with us. After *Davids* humiliation and ſacrifice, the Angell ſtruck not one blow more with the ſword of peſtilence. He meaſures out the length of his anger by the continuance of our rebellions. So that if we expoſtulate with him, *Lord how long wilt thou be angry with us?* He replies, O ye ſons of men, how long will you be rebellious againſt me? Let us not look that the Lord ſhould begin firſt; that his pardon ſhould prevent our repentance. There is great reaſon, he that hath done the offence, ſhould be firſt in making the peace. Every day we expect comfort from God, and every day God expects converſion from us. Every week we look for ſome abatement in the bils, and every week God looks for ſome abatement of our ſins, for ſome amendment of our lives. So *long* as we continue guilty, it is in vain to cry, *O Lord, how long wilt thou be angry?* Our hard hearts are not yet broken with remorſe: alas, what ſhould be done to break them? *The voyce of the Lord breaketh the Cedars*: he [m] breaketh *the mountains*: he breaketh [n] *the heavens*, he [o] breaketh *the ſtones*; and yet his word cannot break our hearts. But if he cannot break us with the rod of Affliction, he will breake us with a rod of iron, and [p] *dash us in pieces like a Potters veſſel.*

[l] Pſa. 29. 5.
[m] Pſa. 18 7.
[n] Iſa 64. 1
[o] 1 Kin. 19, 11.
[p] Pſa. 2. 9.

God is *long* patient before he grows angry; why ſhould he not be *long angry* before he be appeaſed? He is not eaſily provoked, why ſhould he be ſo eaſily pacified? yet ſo propenſe to mercy is our gra-

gracious Father, that the fire which was long a kindling, is soon quenched: His anger, that is not blown into a flame without many and long continued sins, is yet put out with a few penitent tears. When our houses are burning, it were but foolish to cry out, we are undone, alas the fire rageth; and we all the while forbear to cast on water. The *Usque quo* of Gods *anger* waits for the *Quousque* of our repentance. He will not give over striking, till we fall a weeping: and we may do well to weep before him, for (sure) we did ill to sin against him. His *anger* doth now *long* offend us, but our wickednesses did farr longer offend him. We have provoked him many yeares; and shall not his wrath burn many days? Still it flameth: let us make haste to bring our buckets of water, filled at the cisternes of our eyes, and derived from the fountaine of our hearts, to quench it. Let no hands be wanting to this businesse: for if some bring in the water of tears, whiles others cast in the fewell of sins; this fire will burn still. But from the higehst to the lowest let us come in with repentance: and that all of us, even the whole people: for so far Gods wrath extendeth.

3. He may *be angry with the whole people*; which is the third proposition. He hath been angry with a whole family, with a whole Army, with a whole City, with a whole Country, with the whole earth. With a whole family: so he cursed
q 1 Kin. 14. 10. 11 the house of q *Jeroboam*: that *him that dyeth in the City, the dogs shall eat, and him that dyeth in*
r Ps. 37. 36. *the field, shall the fowls of the aire eat.* r With

a whole army, so he slew of *Sennacheribs* host in one night 185 thousand. With a whole city, so the city of *Jericho* was cursed with an universal desolation, never to be reedified without the ruine of the builder. Josh. 6. 17. 21.
With a whole country; So *Saul* was charged to destroy *Amalek*; man and woman, infant and suckling, sheep and oxen, and all that belonged to them. 1 Sam. 15 3.
With the whole earth; when it was become corrupt, he drowned it with a floud. Gen. 6. 12.
Yet observe how God hath qualified his wrath; with his hand of favour snatching some out of his hand of anger. When he cursed the whole Family of *Jeroboam*, he excepted *Abijah*. 1 Kin. 14. 13.
When he doomed to death, the whole *City* of *Jericho*, he excepted the family of *Rahab*. Josh. 6. 17.
When his wrath burned Sodom, he excepted the family of *Lot*.
When his anger drowned the whole world in a deluge, yet his mercy excepted *Noah*, and his octonary household. But his anger is very grievous, when it extends to the whole people. Isa. 9. 19.
Through the wrath of the Lord of hostes, the land is darkned, &c.

What makes him thus universally *angry* with us, but the universalitie of our sins against him? when the passengers ask: *Wherefore hath the Lord done thus to this great City?* Answer is made, *Because they forsooke the Covenant of the Lord, and worshipped other Gods.* Jer. 22. 8. 9.
To such a fearfull height may the sins of the children bring the mother, that that Church which now enjoyes such abundance of truth and peace, may be poisoned with heresie, and wounded with schisme, and suffer an utter direliction. The whole people is guilty of sin, and why for their sins may not *God be angry*

with the whole people? Yea, and long angry too: for it will be very long before that fault will be amended, which hath so long been committed.

Gen. 18. 32. God came to low conditions in the behalfe of Sodome: *Abraham* brought him down to *ten*.

Jer. 5. 1. He came to lower conditions in the behalfe of *Jerusalem*; he brought himself down to *one*: *See if you can find a man, if there be any that seeketh the truth in the whole Citie, and I will pardon it.* O how epidemicall is that wickednesse, where not one escapeth the corruption? We have found the Lord angry enough with a *whole people*, for the sin of one man.

Num. 16. 22. *Lord, hath one man sinned, and wilt thou be wroth with the whole Congregation?* No, Gods vengeance, when it is the hottest, makes difference of offenders: and knows to distinguish betwixt the heads of a faction, and the traine. Though neither be faultlesse, yet the one is plagued, the other pardoned. *Depart from the tents of these wicked men, lest you be consumed in their sins.* So soon as the innocent are severed, the guilty perish. One *Achan* sins, all Israel suffers.

Josh 7. 11. One *David* sins in pride, seventy thousand of his subjects suffer in the plague.

2 Sam. 21. 1. One *Saul* slew the Gibeonites, three years dearth lies upon the Israelites for it. The blood of those Canaanites shed against Covenant, almost forty years before, by the then King, is now called for of the *whole people*. They had all sins enough, but God sixeth his eye of anger upon this. Every sin hath a tongue, but that of blood outcryes them all:

And

And if Justice do not revenge the murder of one, God will require it of the whole nation. When seven of *Sauls* sons were hanged up, *God was intreated for the land.* Then shall the clouds drop fatnesse, and the earth run forth into plenty: Then *do the valleys stand thick with corn, and the little hills rejoyce on every side.* Some drops of blood shed in Justice, procure large showers from heaven. A few carcases laid in their graves, are a rich compost to the earth. There can be no peace, where blood cryes unheard, unregarded: but when it is expiated by the blood of the offenders, there will bee a cessation of Judgements. *Phinehas executed judgment, and the plague ceased.* One contrary is ever cured by another: take away the cause, and the effect will cease. Prayer is very powerfull, but doing of Justice more availeable. The whole Congregation were at their prayers, and those prayers were steeped in tears; yet still the plague raged, and Gods anger continued. But when *Phinehas* had run those two adulterers through with his Javelin, in the act of their sin, the plague was stayed. So blessed a thing is it for any nation, that Justice is impartially executed.

2 Sam. 21 14

Psa. 65. 12.

Pal. 106 30.

Num. 25. 8.

Thus the universality of sin calls for the universality of repentance; or else it will provoke Gods anger to strike us with universall judgements. If the *whole people* be guilty, the *whole people* must fall to deprecation. Such was the Ninivites repentance, *every man turning from his evill ways.* We have sinned, even the whole

Jon. 3. 8.

nation: and as if we had not ſins enough of our own, we borrow of our neighbours. What nation under heaven do we trade withall, from whom the ſinnes of that Nation are not brought hither? And thoſe are merchandizes that might be well ſpared. Are we all in the tranſgreſſion, and do we lay the burden of repentance upon ſome few? If we expoſtulate with God,

Num. 16. 22. *Lord hath one man ſinned, and wilt thou be wrath with the whole Congregation?* May he not more juſtly expoſtulate with us; Hath the whole Congregation ſinned, and is it enough for one man to repent? Is the whole garment fowle, and muſt only the skirts be waſhed? Is the whole building ruinous, and do we think it a ſufficient reparation to patch up one corner of it? No, the plaiſter of our repentance muſt be fully as large as the orifice of our wickedneſſe, or we cannot be healed. But ſtil God wil be angry with us, yea though we were

[a] Pſa. 89. 33 his *own people*: For,

4. God may *be angry with his own people*; which is the fourth propoſition. [a] *I will viſit their ſins with a rod, and their iniquity with ſcourges; but my mercy I will not utterly take from them.* Though he do not take his mercy from them, yet he may be angry with them. He is our father, and never did Father in ſweeter terms entertaine the deareſt treaſures of his blood, then God doth us, when he vouchſafes to call us *His people*: yet did you never ſee a father angry with his child? Indeed there is great difference between that wrath of God which is toward his *own people*, and that

which

which [b] *comes upon the children of disobedience.* They differ three ways.

1. In respect of continuance: his anger upon reprobates is eternall; not extinguished with their bloods, but pursuing them from earth to hell. To *his people* it is but temporary, it lasts but a moment: [c] *weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.* [d] *He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger for ever.* When he was very angry with his Idolatrous Israel, [e] *Moses* does but put him in mind that *they were his own people*, and he was pacified. [f] *For a moment in a little wrath, he hides his face from us.* [g] *Rejoyce not against me, O mine enemy: for though I fall, I shall rise again.* But for the wicked, [h] *his wrath abideth on them.*

2. In respect of the measure: It is milder towards his *own people*, then to others. For the unrighteous, he proportions his Judgements, not to their strengths, but to their deserts: For *his own people*, he proportions his corrections, not to their deserts, but to their strengths. For the former, he minds not what they can beare by their powers, but what they have deserved by their sinnes. For the other, he considers not what their sinnes deserve, but what their Spirits can sustaine. His most bitter wrath to *his own people*, is always sweetned with his mercy. [i] *Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.* He brings a scourge in one hand, and a pardon in the other: and while he draws blood of the flesh, he forgives the soul.

3. In regard of the end. [l] The wicked are *the ves-*

[b] Col. 3 6.
[c] Psal. 30. 5.
[d] Psal. 103. 9.
[e] Exo. 32. 11.
[f] Isa. 54. 8.
[g] Mic. 7. 8.
[h] John 3. 36.
[i] Psa 99. 8.
[l] Rom. 9. 22.

vessels of wrath: and as their sin makes them fit for Gods anger, so his anger makes them *fit for destruction.* But for his *own people*, [m] *They are chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world.* Whether he inflict upon them punishments for sinne, or suffer them to fall into sin for punishments, yet *all shall work to their good.* [n] his corrections are but medicines, *bringing forth the quiet fruit of righteousnesse.* He lets them fall into some hainous crime, but it is to waken their repentance. Small spots upon a garment are not minded; we seldome are so curious as to wash out them. But when a great spot comes, a fowle staine, we then scower and elense it, to get out that; and so wee get out all the little spots too. Sinnes of a lesser size never trouble us; we mind not the washing out of them with our sorrowfull tears: But when a great sin comes, and disquiets the conscience, then repentance, that old landresse is called for: and in that lardar we wash out both the great offence, and all the rest. So God suffers us to fall into some grosse and grievous sinne, as a father suffers his little child to burne his finger in the flame, that his whole body may not fall into the fire.

[m] 1 Cor. 11. 32

[n] Heb. 12. 11.

All these differences are expresst by the Prophet, *Isaiah.* 1. For the time, [o] *Doth the ploughman plough all the day to sow?* God doth not continue ploughing all day long furrows upon our backs, but when he hath broken up the fallow grounds of our hearts, he then sowes in the seed

[o] Isa. 28. 24

of

of his comforts. 2. For the measure; [r] Hath he plagued Israel, as he hath plagued the enemies of Israel? He smites his Israel in the *branches*, and in the bunches; cuts down some of her superfluous boughes, and plucks off clusters of her rotten grapes: But the wicked he smites at the very root. 3. For the end; [s] The fornace of his wrath shall but purge away our drosse, and make us pure metall, fit for the stampe of his owne Image.

[r] Isa. 27 7.

[s] Isa. 27. 9.

Yet for all this, God hath been grievously angry with *his own people*: Yea, their sins anger him most of all; because together with wickednesse, there is unkindnesse. As dearly as he loves them, their sinnes may provoke him. Our interest in God is so far from excusing our iniquities, that it aggravates them. Of all others, the transgression of his *own people* shall not passe unpunished. The nearer we are to him, the nearer do our offences touch him; as a man more takes to heart a discourtesie done by a friend, then a great injury by a stranger. Pagans may blaspheme, and bezzle, and defile the marriage-bed, and yet God let them alone: but he will not endure these sinnes in *his own people*. The more hee loves us, the greater should our love be to him: now love and unkindnesse cannot stand together. If we revolt from our Maker, as *Absolom* thought *Hushai* had renounced *David*, may he not justly expostulate with us; *Is this thy Kindnesse to thy friend?* there is no such irksome disobedience, as where God looks for service. [t] *He came unto his*

[t] John 1. 11.

his own, and his own received him not: O, that could not chuſe but trouble him. As *Demades* ſaid to *Philip* King of *Macedon*, and at a time when he well deſerved it; *Cùm fortuna tibi Agamemnonis perſonam impoſuerit, nonne pudet te Thirſitem agere?* When fortune hath made thee an *Agamemnon*, art thou not aſhamed to play *Thirſites?* When God hath honoured us for *his own people*, with the noble name of Chriſtians is it not a ſhame for us to play the Pagans? "*Happy are the people that be in ſuch a caſe, yea bleſſed are the people that have the Lord for their God.* Yet that people may ſo farre anger him, that he will take away not onely their temporall, but even their ſpirituall happineſſe. Thoſe ſeven Churches of *Aſia* were Gods *owne people*: yet the Goſpel was not faſtned to their territories; as the old Romans pinnioned their goddeſſe *Victoria*, or their apiſh poſterity doe the Catholick faith, to their own infallible Chaire. But as they had a time to breathe, ſo a time to expire: and ſo hath my fourth propoſition. There is but one gradation more.

5. God may be angry with *his people that prayeth.* Wherein we have two main obſervations. Firſt, The wonder, that God will be angry at *our prayers.* Secondly, the anſwer, which reſolves the wonder; ſhewing why our very *prayers* may anger him. Either of theſe is back'd with three circumſtances. 1. For the wonder, that *God is angry with his people that prayeth.*

1. All

1. All the other conclusions are easily granted: God may be *angry*, and angry very long, and angry with *the whole people*, and angry with *his own people*; all this because of their sins: But that he should be angry at *their prayers*, this is the wonder. He hath commanded us to *pray*, and will he be offended with us for doing his command? *Angry against our prayer!* He hath commended to us *Prayer*, as the only means to asswage his anger: and yet is hee angry at our *Prayer?* [a] *Phinehas prayed, and his anger was pacified:* [b] *Aaron prayed*, and the plague ceased: and will he now be angry with *the people that prayeth?* He is a God that heareth prayer: [c] *O thou that heares prayer, to thee shall all all flesh come*: and does he now reject *prayer?* He hath so stiled his own house; *Oratoriam, the house of prayer*: and to them that pray unto him in his house, he hath promised peace; [d] *In this house will I give peace, saith the Lord of hostes.* Peace and wrath are contraries: how should *prayer* procure peace, when God is angry at *prayer? Prayer* is so noble, that under it is comprehended the whole worship of God: [e] *Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord, shall be saved*: and yet wil God be angry at the prayer of his people? It is a great honour that God will vouchsafe to speake unto man; but a far greater honour, that man is allowed to speak unto God: the very Angels stand in admiration of it: and yet what comfort is there in that, when God is angry *at the prayer of his people?* What blessing is there,

[a] Psa. 106. 30.
[b] Num. 16. 15.
[c] Psal. 65. 2.
[d] Hag. 2. 9.
[e] Rom. 10. 13.

which our *prayers* cannot infeoffe us in? Wee ſend up *Prayer* to God with the ſame confidence, that *Adoniah* ſent *Bathſheba* to *Solomon*, [f] *the King will deny thee nothing*: and will God bee angry *at prayer*? It is the onely means we have to pacifie him, *Prayer*: and ſhall our *Prayer* anger him? Alas, what hope is left us, when God is angry at *Prayer*? This hath often turned away his wrath, and does it now incenſe his wrath? If we ſhould not *pray*, he would then be angry: and when we do *pray*, is he angry too? What, neither way pleaſed? What is the reaſon why there is ſo much empty caſk in Gods cellar, but for want of *prayer*? [g] *Ye have not, becauſe ye aſk not*: and ſhall not *prayer* obtain favour? [h] *Oh Lord, what ſhall I ſay* (it was the complaint of *Joſhua*) *when Iſrael turneth their backs before their enemies?* So, what ſhal we ſay, what ſhall we do, when God turneth back our *prayers*? Why is it called *the throne of Grace*, before which wee preſent our *prayers*; if that throne ſend forth nothing but beams of wrath? We look for grace, and a favourable audience of our petitions; but alas, what ſhall become of us, when God is angry at our very *prayers*?

2. How wonderfull is the power of *prayer*? [i] *Let me alone*, ſaith God to *Moſes*: who would look for ſuch a word from God to man, as *let me alone*? As yet *Moſes* had ſaid nothing: before he opens his mouth, God prevents his importunity, as foreſeeing the holy violence of

[f] 1 Kin. 2. 17.

[g] Jam. 4. 2.

[h] Joſh. 7. 8.

[i] Exo. 32. 10.

prayer.

prayer. *Moses* stood trembling before the Majesty of his Maker, as fearing his dire revenge: and, yet that Maker doth (after a sort) sollicite *Moses* for leave to revenge; *let me alone*. As it was afterwards said of Christ, concerning some places, that *he could do no miracles there, because of their unbelief*: So one would think, that God could do no Judgements here, because of *Moses* his faith. *Let me alone*; why, what can resist God? Yes, *Prayer* can resist him. Such is his mercy, that he hath (as it were) obliged his power, to the faith of our *Prayer*. He enables us to resist himselfe: *Seipsum vincit*. The fervent *prayer* of the faithfull, can bind the hands of the Almighty. What is there that God can do, which *Prayer* cannot do? O mighty, I had almost said, Almighty *Prayer*! What a hand is that which can hold omnipotence? What wings are those that can overtake infiniteneſſe? Yet alas, we may now mourn over *Prayer*, as *David* did over *Jonathan*; [l] *How are the mighty fallen!* *Prayer* hath lost her force with God, when God is angry with *prayer*. Her wings are clipt, that she cannot mount: Her bow is broken; she cannot shoot an arrow that reaches the marke. [m] She is become a widow, as it was lamented over *Jerusalem*, desolate and solitary, that was a Princeſſe among the Provinces, and a Queen among the nations. She sits weeping in the dust, and hath almost forgot the use of speech. She mournes not so much for *Mary's abstulerunt Dominum*, for she knows where to find him; as that our sins

[l] 2 Sam. 1. 25.

[m] Lam. 1. 1.

Abſtulerunt Domini favorem, and ſhe knows not how to pacifie him: And how ſhould ſhe, when God is angry with his people *that prayeth?* Where is the ſtrength of this *Samſon?* What is become of that power, which was wont to command heaven and earth? The viſible heavens have been opened by *prayer*: [n] ſo *Elias* brought down raine. The inviſible heavens have been opened by *prayer*: ſo the penitent malefactor got from the Croſſe into Paradiſe. [o] So *Stephen ſaw the heavens opened, and the Sonne of man ſtanding at the right hand of God, Omnia vincentem vincit.* It was wont to be an eſpeciall favourite of God; but now (alas) it is caſt out of favour, for God is angry *with prayer*. [r] *Thou haſt covered thy ſelfe with a thick cloud, that our prayer ſhould not paſſe thorow.* This is a wofull condition of our ſouls, when the Lord is angry at our *prayers*: when he will not hear them, not anſwer them, it is a cauſe of ſadneſſe in us; but much more, when he is angry with them. [ſ] *Therefore will I deale in fury: though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.* This is fury indeed: Before, the ancients of Iſrael had ſaid, *The Lord ſeeth us not, he hath forſaken the earth*: There they deny God eyes, and here he denyes them ears. A burning wrath; as the Originall hath it; *How long wilt thou ſmoak againſt the prayer of thy people?*

[n] Jam. 5. 18.

[o] Act. 7. 56.

[r] Lam. 3. 44.

[ſ] Ezc. 8. 18.

3. And of *thy people*: this encreaſeth the wonder. For God to ſtopp his ears againſt the

prayers

prayers of the Heathen, to reject the petitions of Idolaters, to deſpiſe a devotion done before painted blocks and Images, is no marvel. For they diſhonour him in their *prayers*; and God will be angry with any thing that eclipſeth his glory. But he does not uſe to ſlight thoſe that ſerve him, and continue in his holy worſhip. It is ſtrange that hee ſhould bee angry at the *prayer of his own people*: Angry with them whom hee hath choſen; angry with them long, and angry with them at their very *prayers*. This muſt bee ſome extraordinary wrath: and ſo you have all the circumſtances that may advance the wonder.

Now for the Anſwer that takes off this admiration; and ſatisfies us with ſome reaſons, why God may bee angry *with his people that prayeth*. God is never angry at his people without a cauſe: and it muſt be a great cauſe that makes him angry with them in their devotions: whereof wee have three conſiderations.

1. There may be infirmities enough in our very *Prayers*, to make them unacceptable. As if they bee, 1. *Exanimes*, without life and ſoul: when the heart knowes not what the tongue utters. 2. Or *Perfunctoriæ*; for God will none of thoſe prayers, that *come out of fained lips*. 3. Or *Tentativæ*; for they that will *petere tentando*, tempt God in prayer, ſhall go without. 4. Or *fluctuantes*, of a wild and wan-

wandring discourse, ranging up and down; which the Apostle calls, *beating the aire*: as huntsmen beat the bushes, or *Saul* sought his fathers asses. Such *prayers* will not stumble upon the Kingdome of Heaven. 5. Or if they bee *Præproperæ*, run over in hast: as some use to choppe up their prayers, and thinke long till they have done. But they that *pray* in such hast, shall bee heard at leisure. 6. Or *sine fiducia*: the faithlesse man had as good hold his peace, as pray. Hee may babble, but *prayes* not: hee prayes infectually, and receives not. He may lift up his hands, but hee does not lift up his heart. Onely *the prayer of the righteous availeth*, and onely the beleever is righteous. But the formall devotion of a faithlesse man, is not worth that crust of bread which hee askes. 7. Or *sine humilitate*: so the Pharisees prayer was not properly *Supplicatio*, but *superlatio*. A presumptuous *Prayer* profanes the Name of God, in stead of Adoring it. All, or any of these defects may marre the successe of our *Prayers*.

2. But such is the mercy of our God, that he will winke at many infirmities in our devotions: and does not reject the *Prayer* of an honest heart, because of some weaknesse in the petitioner. It must bee a greater cause then all this, that makes God angry *at our prayers*. In generall, it is sinne. [t] *We know that God heareth not sinners: but if a man doth his will, him he heareth.* [u] *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer.* They bee our sins that block

[t] Joh. 9. 31.
[u] Ps. 66. 18.

up

up the passage of our *prayers*. It is not the vast distance between Heaven and earth, not the thick clouds, not the threefold regions, nor the sevenfold Orbes, nor the firmament of starrs, but only our sinnes, that hinder the ascent of our prayers. *When you make many prayers, I will not hear you*; Why? [a] *Because your hands are full of blood.* God will none of those petitions, that are presented to him with bloody hands. Our *prayers* are our bills of exchange; and they are allowed in Heaven, when they come from pious and humble hearts: But if wee bee broken in our religion, and bankrouts of grace, God will protest our bills, hee will not bee wonne with our *prayers*. Thus sinn is the generall cause. [a] Isa. 1. 15.

3. In particular, it is the hypocrisie of sinne, or the sinne of hypocrisie, that makes God so angry with our *prayers*. When wee honour him with the prostration of our bodies, and sollicite him with the petitions of our lips, and yet stil dishonour him in our sinfull lives, is not this hypocrisie? When we speak before him in the Temple as suppliants, and sinne against him abroad like rebells, is not this hypocrisie? Like the outlaw, that sues to the King for a pardon, and yet resolves to live in rebellion. We will not part with our beloved sinnes, and yet begge the removall of Judgements; will not this dissimulation make God angry with our very *prayers*? If wee shall, *Judas*-like, kisse his Throne with the Devotion of our lipps, and betray

tray his Honour with the wicked works of our hands, ſhould he not be angry at our prayers? Wee make as if we did lift up our hands unto him, but indeed we ſtretch out our hands againſt him: if this be *prayer*, it is ſuch a one as deſerves anger. Fear can make the Divell himſelfe fall to his prayers; [b] *I beſeech thee, torment mee not.* Another requeſt he made, which Chriſt granted; but it was in wrath, not in favour. The pride of our hearts, the covetouſneſſe of our hands, the blaſphemy of our mouthes, the uncleanneſſe of our luſts, the wickedneſſe of our lives; theſe make God angry with our *prayers.* If wee could bee throughly angry at our ſinnes, God would ceaſe to be angry at our prayers. But ſo long as wee run on in thoſe ſinful courſes upon earth, let us look for no favourable audience from heaven. Doe good, and continue it: then *pray* for good, and have it. It hath been ſaid, *loquere ut te videam*, ſpeak that I may ſee thee: ſo ſaith God to man; *Operare ut te audiam*, worke that I may heare thee. If we diſhonour Gods Name by our oaths and blaſphemies, and upon every triviall occaſion toſſe it in our profane mouthes; in vaine we *pray*, *Sanctificetur Nomen tuum, Hallowed be thy Name.* If we heare the Goſpel preached, and receive no inſtruction by it, nor give any regard or obedience to it; in vaine wee *pray*, *Adveniat regnum tuum, thy Kingdome come.* If the current of our affections and actions runs croſſe to the will of God; in vain we *pray*, *Fiat voluntas tua*, *Thy will be done.* If we extort the bread of the poor

[b] Lu. 8. 28.

out

out of their hands, or seek to live by violence or oppression; in vain we *pray*, *Panem nostrum da nobis quotidianum*, *Give us this day our daily bread*: For this is to attempt to have it whether God will or no: he does not give it, but we snatch it. Whiles we are indulgent to our darling sinnes, and will not part with the deare delight of our bloods, in vain we *pray*, *Dimitte nobis debita nostra*, *Forgive us our trespasses*. Whiles we seek to revenge our wrongs upon others, and bear malice in our hears; our *Sicut nos dimittimus*, *As wee forgive them that trespasse against us*, doth but begge for vengeance upon our own heads. All the while that we listen to the suggestions of Satan, and like the allurements of the world, and awaken our owne lusts to tempt our selves; it is but a mockery to *pray*, *In tentationem ne nos inducas*, *lead us not into temptation*. While we seek that which is evill, and study that which is evill, and runne with greedinesse into evill; in vaine we pray, *Libera nos à malo*, *Deliver us from evill*. We do but flatter God, and complement with him, when we conclude with *Tuum est regnum, potentia, & gloria*, *Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory*; for it is our own glory we seek after, not his. All this cannot keep him from being angry with our *prayers*. So long as his people rebelleth, he *wil be angry with his people that prayeth*. For some Use.

If God be angry with them that *pray*, what will he be with them that do not pray? With them that break his laws, and never cry him mer-

cy, with them that live in wickednesse, and never ask him forgivenesse? *The ungodly call not upon the Lord*: will he not be much more angry with them? Psa. 14. 4. *God is not in all their thoughts*: but they are in the thoughts of God. He thinks on them with indignation, and will remember them to their cost. Psal. 10. 4. *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom, in the day of Jerusalem*: yes, hee will remember them in the day of their destruction. Psa. 137. 7.

If God be sometimes angry at our *prayers*, how will he brooke our curses? If he beat back our petitions, how will he take vengeance on our blasphemies? *Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing*: but God will not accept of a blessing, from a mouth that is so used to cursing. If he may be so angry with a people that *prayeth*, what will his wrath do to a people that sweareth? Think this, ye that (if it were possible) would swear God out of his Throne, and the Judge of all the world out of his Tribunall: your very *prayers are abominable*: your blasphemous breaths have put a stink into all your sacrifices. That tongue is fit for nothing but flames, which so flameth with oaths and execrations. Your *prayers* cannot be heard, by reason of your sins: but your blasphemies shall be heard and plagued, notwithstanding your *prayers*. Jam. 3. 10. If the Instrument gives a harsh sound, there is trouble in stead of musick: a jarring organ grates the eares, rather then delights them. Our sinnes have put all our Instruments out of

tune,

tune, and for them God is angry at our very *prayers*.

There is no way to take off his anger, but by turning from our wickednesse. If we break off our sinnes, *he will leave a blessing behind him, even a meat-offering, and a drink-offering to the Lord:* he will both give, and take our sacrifice. Let us do thus, and *prove him, whether he will not open the windows of heaven.* Our repentance and righteousnesse shall open heaven, so that our *prayers* may goe up for a blessing, and a blessing shall come down upon our *prayers*. *Prayer* is *vox fidei*, as *John* Baptist was *vox Christi*: if we mourne, and do not pray, our faith hath lost her voice: and prayer without faith, is *John* without Christ, a *voice* without a *word*. Faith is the soul, and repentance is the life of Prayer; and a prayer without them, hath neither life nor soul. If we beleeve not, *we are yet in our sinnes*: if we repent not, our sinnes are yet in us: and so long as this state continueth, no wonder *if God be angry with his People that prayeth.* But *first will I wash mine hands in innocency, and then will I compasse thine Altar.* Then *shall my Prayer be set before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands like the Evening sacrifice.* When with the sword of severe and impartiall repentance, wee have cut the throate of our sins, and done execution upon our own lusts: then let us solicite heaven with our *Prayers*: then *Pray*, and speed: then come, and welcome: no *Anger*, but all mercy then. Then the Cour-

Joel 2.14.

Mal. 3.10.

Psal. 26.6.

Ps. 141.2.

tiers about the King in Heaven, make room for *prayer*. Then the Prince himſelfe wil take *prayer* into his own hand, and with a gracious mediation preſent it to his Father. Then *mittimus preces & lacrymas ad Deum legatos.* Then is that Court of Audience ready to receive and anſwer our Ambaſſadours, which bee our *Prayers* and Tears. Then Saint *John* ſees twelve gates in heaven, all open, and all day open, to entertain ſuch ſuitors.

Cypr.

This is our refuge, and that a ſure one. Although the Enemy begirts a City with never ſo ſtraight a ſiege, and ſtop up all the paſſages; yet he cannot block up the paſſage to Heaven: So long as that is open, and God in league with us, there may bee reliefe and ſuccour had from thence by *prayer*. Faith is a better engineer then was *Dædalus*; and yet he could make a ſhift to frame wings, with which hee made an eſcape over thoſe high walls, wherein he was impriſoned. *Reſtat iter cœlo, tentabimus ire.* Let *Pharaoh* bee behind, the red ſea before, the high rocks and mountaines on every ſide; yet *Iſrael* can find a way for all that. When there is no other way to eſcape danger, a Chriſtian can go by heaven, and avoid all by *prayer*. As it is the heavieſt malediction, *Let his prayer be turned into ſin*: ſo it is a happy bleſſing, when our ſinne is turned into *prayer*; when ſinne is ſo done away, that *prayer* may take place. Then ſhall *Jacobs* ladder be never empty of *Angels*; our prayers aſcending to heaven, and Gods bleſſings deſcending.

Pſal. 109. 7.

ding upon us. Then ſhall *prayer* disburden our hearts of all ſorrowes, and God ſhall fill them with his ſweet comforts. Then ſhalt we ſing with chearfull voices; *Bleſſed be the Lord, that hath not turned away our praier from him, nor his mercie from us.* Amen. Pſal. 66. 20.

FINIS.

FINIS.

MAN'S COMFORT.

PSALM 94. 19.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.

HEaven is a place of infinite glory and joy; yet is there little joy or glory in the way thither. The passage rather lies through much tribulation: so troublesome a gallery leads to so happy a bed-chamber. There is not a soul in the cluster of mankind exempted from sorrow; much lesse shall those grapes escape pressing, which God hath reserved for his own cup. *All that will live godly in Christ, shall suffer persecution.* Not all that live, but all that live godly: nor all that live godly in respect of outward form, but that live godly in Christ. *Paul*, his Atturney, pleads their afflictions with an *Oportet*: and lest some should look for a dispensation, he backs it with an *Omnis.*

Act. 14. 22.

2 Tim. 3. 12.

nis. The Saints that have overcome the hill, be ſinging above: we that are climbing up, muſt be groaning all the way. The Anthems in the upper Quire, the Church Triumphant, are all Hymns of joy: the militant part muſt bee content with ſad tunes in this valley of tears. Not that the bleſſednesſe of Immortality is no more perfect, but that it needs a foil of perplexity to ſet it off. Not that the joy of heaven is no more ſweet, but that it needs the ſowrenes of the world to give it a taſt. Not that the peace and plenty of Canaan, required the wants and moleſtations of this wilderneſſe to commend it. But ſo it pleaſeth the Almighty King, who of his own free grace doth give the preferment, to interpoſe the conditions: that the ſorrow and inglorioufneſſe of this world, ſhould be the throughfare to the glories and joyes of his Kingdome. For if it pleaſed him to conſecrate the Prince and *Captaine of our ſalvation through ſufferings*, what priveledg can the common ſouldiers and ſubjects expect? *Deus Filium habuit unum ſine peccato, nullum ſine flagello.* Wee that hold our inheritance *in Capite*, have no other title to it then Chriſt had before us; by ſuffering.

When we conſider *David and his troubles*, we ſay. *Ecce dolores viri*, behold the ſorrowes of a man. But when we conſider the Sonne of *David*, and his paſſion; we ſay, *Ecce vir dolorum*, *Behold the man of ſorrowes.* Indeed, if the one ballance were full of ſorrows, and the other quite empty of comforts, there were an unequall poiſe.

They

They that do not finde some joy in their sorrows, some comfort in their dejections, in this world, are in a fearfull danger of missing both in the next. But as it is said in case of bodily sickneſſe; If the patient and the diſeaſe joyne, then in vaine is the Phyſician: if the diſeaſe and the Phyſician conſpire, then wo be to the patient: but if the patient and the Phyſician accord, then vaniſheth the diſeaſe. So we may obſerve in ſpirituall diſtempers: if the ſoul and ſorrow deſperately combine, then the Spirit departs, the Phyſician is grieved: if God and ſorrow joyne, in anger, in anguiſh, the former juſtly, the other ſharply, then wo to the ſoul, for that cannot be comforted: but if the ſoul by faith, and God by grace, unite themſelves, then away flies ſorrow, for that is expelled. Here *Davids* ſoul joynes it ſelf with the ſpirit of conſolation; and ſorrow loſeth the day, the end is comfort. *In the multitude of my thoughts within mee, thy comforts delight my ſoul.*

Here is a twofold Army, one marching againſt another: *Seditio*, and *Sedatio*: an inſurrection, and a debellation; a tumult, and the appeaſing of it: a band of thoughts aſſaulting, and an Hoſt of *comforts* repelling, reſiſting, protecting. There is a *multitude* of thoſe thoughts, and no leſſe is the number of theſe comforts. Thoſe troublous thoughts have got into the citadel of the heart, *Apud me, within me*: and theſe conſolatory forces have entred as farr, even into the ſoul; *They delight my ſoul.* Thoſe thoughts

fight under the colours of flesh and blood, but these comforts under the Banner of God; They are *My* thoughts, but *Thy* comforts: the cogitations of man, the consolations of Jesus Christ.

1. Look upon the adversary power; *In the multitude of my thoughts within me.* 1. O that they were some externall grievances, a forraign warr, no domestick, intestine, civill broiles; not turbulent *thoughts.* 2. Or if they be thoughts, rebellious, heart-breaking cogitations; yet that there were but some few of them, that they might be sooner suppressed; not so numerous, not a multitude of thoughts. 3. Or if they must bee thoughts, and a multitude; yet that they had chosen some other place to rise in, not my Heart, the Fort, or Court, or Bedchamber of my spirit; that they had not presumed unto so bold approaches, as to mutine *Apud me, within my heart*, nearer and closer to mee then mine owne bowels. But now, to bee *Thoughts*, of so tumultuous a nature: *Multitudes*, of so mighty a number: *Within me*, of so fearfull a danger; without vent, composition, or quiet; here is a ful anxiety.

2. View the defensive forces; and in the midst of this conspiracy make room for preservation; *Thy comforts delight my soul.* 1. They are *comforts*: against litigious and unquiet thoughts, a work of peace; *Comforts.* 2. They are not scant & niggardly; but against a multitude of thoughts, many *Comforts*, and every one able to quell a whole rout of distractions. 3. They are *thy* comforts, not proceeding from

men or Angels, but immediately from the Spirit of consolation: against *My* sorrows, *Thy* comforts. 4. They do not onely pitch their tents about me, or like a subsidiary guard, environ me; but they take up their residence in the heart of my heart; *In my soul.* These refresh more then the other can offend: against the thoughts in my heart, thy comforts *delight* my soul.

Thus if we be not entred into *Aceldama*, a field of blood; yet we are got into *Meribah*, a field of strife; or the *mountains of Bether*, a field of division: not unlike that of *Rebecca's* womb, where *Jacob* strove with *Esau* for the victory. We have seen both the Armies; now let us martiall them into their proper ranks, setting both the squadrons in their due stations and postures; and then observe the successe or event of the battell. And because the malignant Host is first entred into the ground of my text, consider with me, 1. The rebells or mutiners, *Thoughts*. 2. The number of them; no less then a *multitude*, many thoughts. 3. The Captain, whose colours they bear; a disquieted mind; *My* thoughts. 4. The field where the battel is fought; in the heart; *Apud me, within me.* Cant. 2. 17.

In the other Army we find. 1. *Quantis*, how puissant they are; *Comforts*. 2. *Quot*, how many they are; indefinitely set down; Abundant comforts. 3. *Cujus*, whose they are? The Lords, he is their generall; *Thy* comforts. 4. *Quid operantur*, what they do: they *delight the soul.* In the nature of them, being *Comforts*,

there is tranquility: in the number of them, being many comforts, there is ſufficiency: in the owner of them, being *Thy* comforts, there is omnipotency: in the effect of them, *delighting the ſoul*, there is ſecurity. There is no fear in them, for they come for peace; they are *Comforts*. There is no weakneſſe in them; for they come in troopes, they are many comforts. There is no diſorder in them, for the God of wiſdome is their Captain, and leads their forces, they are *Thy* comforts. There is no trouble in them, for they evangelize joy, *They delight the ſoul*.

1. The Rebells are *thoughts*. Man is an abridgment of the world, and is not exceeded by it, but in quantity, his pieces be not *pauciora, ſed minora*. If all the veins of our bodies were extended to rivers, our ſinews to mines, our muſcles to mountaines, our bones to quarries of ſtone, our eyes to the bigneſſe of the Sunne and Moon, and all other parts to the proportion of ſuch things as correſpond to them in the world; man might ſtride over the ſea, as the Hebrews fained of *Adam*; the aire would bee too little for him to move in, and the whole firmament but enough for this Starre; yea indeed, this little world would be the great one, and that great world appear but the little one. There is nothing in the world for which we may not find ſome anſwerable part in man: but there is ſomething in man for which we can find no anſwerable part in the world: I need not ſay Part; for the whole world is

not

not able to give any repreſentation. Man hath a ſoul, made after the Image of God: of this the world can yeild no reſemblance. The world produceth innumerable creatures; man yet in more abundance. Our creatures are our *thoughts*, creatures that are borne Gyants; that can reach from eaſt to weſt, from earth to heaven. Theſe can ſurvey the whole earth, beſtride the ocean, comprehend the vaſt air, and ſpan the very firmament.

How capable, how active is the ſoul of man! It is even comprehenſive of univerſality, and hath *virtutem ad infinita:* nature hath ſet no limits to the *thoughts* of the ſoul. It can paſſe by her nimble wings from earth to heaven in a moment: it can be all things, comprehend all things, know that which is, and conceive of that which never was, never ſhall be. The heart is but a little houſe, and hath but three chambers, yet there is room enough for a world of gueſts. God, the Creator of all, made this ſoul in a Cottage of clay, and this ſoul is a kind of Creator too: for though it dwell in a cloſe priſon, it can produce creatures, *Thoughts*: and any one of theſe creatures can move with the Heavens, move faſter then the Heavens; overtake the Sun, and overgoe the Sun; contemplate that which the Sun never ſaw, even the dreadfull abyſſe of hell, and a glimpſe of the glory of Heaven. So various and innumerable are the *thoughts* of man, that hee had need of an aſtrolobe, to marke in what height and elevation they are; and ſo either to advance

vance them, or ſtoope them, as they deſerve.

There be three ſorts of actions proceeding from the ſoul: ſome internall and immateriall, as the pure acts of our wits and wills; ſome external and materiall, as the meer acts of our ſenſe; others mixt, between both, and bordering upon both the former; which Saint *Auguſtine* ſayes, the Greeks call παθη, the Latines *Perturbationes*. As the heart inſpireth one and the ſame ſtrength and life into all the parts of the body, for the better diſcharge of their diverſe functions; though all the parts do not receive it in the ſame degree. The ſtomack by the vertue it receiveth, is made able to digeſt: the liver, to concoct the nutriment into blood: the ſpleen like a ſpunge, by ſuckling up the melancholy ſpirits, to purge the vital parts. So the ſoul breeds all theſe creatures, gives life to all theſe *thoughts*; yet according to their ſeverall acts and offices, they have ſeveral names. If they be ſenſitive, we call them paſſions: if ſenſuall, luſts: if fantaſticall, Imaginations: if reaſonable, arguments: if reflective, conſcience: as they are evill, the ſuggeſtions of Satan: as good, the motions of the holy Ghoſt. As the world produceth vipers, and ſerpents, and venemous creatures, wormes and caterpillars, that would devour their parent: ſo the ſoul breeds noxious and mutinous *thoughts*, that are like an earthquake in her bowels; and whiles they maintain civil broiles and factions, one againſt another, ſhe feels the ſmart of all.

Some

Some *thoughts* be the darts of Satan; and these *Non nocent, si non placent*: we cannot keep theeves from looking in at our widowes, we need not give them entertainment with open doors. As the Hermite said, he could not hinder the birds from flying over his head; but he could keep them from building their nests in his haire. *Wash thy heart from iniquity, that thou maist bee saved: how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. 4. 14. They may be passengers, they must not be sojourners: God hath made a Statute against such inmates: it is an unblest hospitality that gives them lodging: he is no friend to the King that harbours these Seminaries. Other *thoughts* are the motions of Gods spirit; and these must not only be guests, but familiar friends: salutation is not here enough, but glad entertainment, welcome, and indulgence. Let no man like himself the better for some good *thoughts*: the praise and benefit of these motions is not in the receit, but in the retention. Easie occasions will fright away good *thoughts* from a carnall heart: like children, which if a bird do but flie in their way, cast their eye from their book. But *Davids thoughts* here were anxious, commotive thoughts; otherwise they stood not in such need of comforts. It is likely that they were either *Timoris*, fearfull thoughts; or *Doloris*, sorrowfull thoughts: Thoughts of fear for what might bee, or thoughts of sorrow for what already was.

The *thoughts* of fear are troublesome enough:

as the ill affections of the ſpleen do mingle themſelves with every infirmity of the body: no leſſe doth fear inſinuate it ſelf into every paſſion of the mind. *David* might find this complication in his thoughts: I will pleaſe *Saul* with my harpe: but then fear replies, he will ſtrike me through with his Javelin. He will give me his own daughter in marriage: but fear ſays again, How if this prove a fatall dowry, if this match be my ſnare! I will refuge my ſelf with *Achiſh* at *Gath*: yet what truſt is there in Infidels? I will lie hidden in *Keilah*, or *Hachilah*; but fear ſuggeſts, How if the *Ziphites* diſcover me? What ſhall I do? whither ſhall I go? where ſhall I reſt? Theſe were thoughts that ſtood in great need of comfort.

The *thoughts* of ſorrow are yet more diſtractive; and ſuch were this royall Prophets: as our vulgar reads; *In the multitude of the ſorrowes that I had in my heart.* What was the cauſe of thoſe griefs: *The ſlipping of his foot*, his errors, his deviations, his ſinnes. Other ſorrowes may diſquiet the ſoul: none but theſe have the promiſe to be comforted. As in martyrdome, it is not the ſword or torture; not what we ſuffer, but why, that makes us martyrs. So in our ſorrowes, it is not how deep they penetrate, or how ſharply they cruciate, but wherefore, that approves their goodneſſe. If our ſins be the *why* of our ſorrowes, we are bleſſed. *Bleſſed are they that* Mat. 5. 4. thus *mourne, for they ſhall be comforted.* Vaine are the ſighes and groanes that proceed onely

from the thought of worldly losses. A medicine that cureth the eyes, we say, was made for the eyes, and for nothing else. We lose our wealth, and sorrow for it; will sorrow recover it? wee are despised or abused, and grieve for it: will grief right us? We bury our friends, and mourn for them; will mourning restore them to us? we are crossed by our unruly children, and weep for it: will weeping rectifie them? We are anguished in our bodies with paines and sickness, and are sorry for it: will sorrow heal us, nay wil it not rather hurt us? All our thoughts, and cares, and griefes, and tears can do us no good, no relief in these calamities: sorrow was not made for these things. But we sin, and offend the Lord; and we are sorrowfull for it; here is the disease for which sorrow is the proper remedy: penitent sorrow shall take away sin. *Quamvis peccavit David, quod solent reges: tamen pœnitentiam egit, flevit, jejunavit, quod non solent reges*: saith Saint *Ambrose*, who wrote him an apologie. While the ground of our lesson is our sinne, the choisest descant on it must bee our sorrow. Our thoughts and griefes may bee many; but if they bee not spent upon our sinnes, wee shall not bee comforted.

Chrys.

Chrys. Hom. 2. Ad pop. Antioch

2. The number of them is a *multitude*: wee may say of sorrows, as it is said of shrewd turnes; they seldome come single. Like a volley of folding waves, one tumbling upon the neck of another; all threatning to overwhelme us: *Undæ*

superadvenit unda. It is too scant a name which
Gen.30,11. *Leah* gave her son, calling him *Gad*, *a troope cometh*: and but enough, what the demoniacke answered Christ: *My name is Legion, for we are*
Marke 5.9. *many.* If they were a *multitude*, and not *sorrowes*; the more the merryer: if they were *sorrows*, and not a multitude; then the fewer the better cheare. But to bee disquieting thoughts, and
Psal.34.19. a *multitude*, makes up a terrible agony. *Many are the troubles of the righteous*: great or many, a great many, a great deal too many; but for the comfort of the *deliverance*. When *Jobs* afflictions began, they came in troops and hurries: so thick that hee could scarce take breath: one messenger pressing in with his woefull relation, before the other could have ended his sad tale.
Job 1.16. *While he was yet speaking.* How did that fugitive Prophet amplifie and aggravate his dangers? *Thou hadst cast mee into the deepe, in the midst of the seas, and the floods compassed me a-*
Jonah 2.3. *bout: all thy waves and billowes passed over mee.* It was no shallow river, but *the sea*: not neare the shore, but in *the midst of the sea*: not was he floting on the waves, but plunged *into the deep* or bottom; the floods compassing, the billows overwhelming, to keep him down. I need not travel for exemplifications.

Let him be our instance, that spake what he felt, and felt what he spake; sorrowes enough to breake any heart, but that which God had framed according to his own. His sonne *Ammon* ravisheth his own sister, and is murdered by his own brother:

brothers that murder is seconded with Treason, that Treason with an incestuous constupration: the insurrection of his own son hath driven him from his house, from his throne, from the Arke of God: all this went near him, that son is slain by his servant, and that went nearer him. In what a miserable perplexity may wee thinke the heart of this good King all the while? Here was thought upon thought, thought against thought, how at once to spare the sonne of *David*, and to save the Father of *Absolom*: fear against hope, north against south, wind against tide, *Arma armis contraria, fluctibus undæ*, a *multitude* of thoughts able to rend the heart in pieces, but for that recollection of mercy, *Thy comforts delight my soul.*

Not seldome fares it thus with us. Thought calls to thought, jealousie to fear, fear to sorrow, sorrow to despaire, and these furies leap upon the heart as a stage, beginning to act their tragicall parts. Man hath more wheels moving in him then a clock: onely the difference is, that the wheeles of a clocke move all one way, whereas his faculties, like the epicycles, have a rapt motion: his sensitive appetite gives him one motion, his fantasie another, his reason a third, and his imperious, impetuous will crosseth them all, driving the chariot of his affections with the fury of *Jehu*: he desires, and thinks, and chuseth, argues, consents, and dislikes, and makes more businesse then time it self. There

Plura machinatur cor meum uno momento, quam in omnes homines perficere possunt uno anno Hugo l. 3 de Anima.

are not so many houres in a year, as there may be thoughts in an hour. The Philosopher that had shamed himselfe by weakly disputing with *Adrian* the Emperour, thus excused himself to his friend; Would you have me contend with him, that commands thirty Legions? Alas, what can quiet that soul, which is distracted with such legions and *multitudes* of thoughts, and throngs of sorrowes?

3. The Captaine of this troublesome rout is himselfe; *My* thoughts. From what suggestion soever our thoughts come, wee call them our own: Whosoever begot the babe, the mother calls it her own child. Indeed, the praise and propriety of good motions we ascribe onely to God, without whom wee *cannot* so much as *think a good thought*: as the channell may gather filth of it selfe, but it cannot have a drop of pure water but from the fountain. Bad suggestions, though they proceed from Satan, we call them our own, because they are bred in the womb of our natural corruption: stubble is blown by the winde into the fire, and being inflamed, it becomes fire. The Divel tempted *David* to sin; yet he calls it his sin; not Satans, but his own; *I will be sorry for my sinne.* However *Epictetus* could say, when evil happens to a man, one of the vulgar would blame others, a young Philosopher would blame himself, but one that had dived into the depth of nature, would blame neither the one, nor the other: Yet a Christian hath learned to blame himselfe, as know-

ing that all his ſorrowes proceed from his ſins.

My thoughts: thus eaſie is it with God to make a man become his own puniſher. Under whoſe regiment are all theſe troubles? Under my ſelfe, *My* thoughts. As God threatens *Tyre*, that ancient and glorious City; that *her owne feet ſhall carry her afarre off to ſojourne*: Our own feet ſhall carry us, our own creatures torment us: like diamonds, we are cut with our own duſt. When David had numbred the people, *his own heart ſmote him*: God finds the rod within us, wherewith to ſcourge us. As ſome vapor engendred in the cavernes of the earth, ſtruggles for vent; and being barred of free paſſage, cauſeth an earthquake in the foundations that bred it. Or as ſome fiery exhalation wrapp'd up in the bowels of a thick cloud, breakes through that watry reſiſtance, and delivers it ſelf to the world with a dreadful noiſe. So the griefs and perturbations begotten by our own luſts, become terrours within us, and rend our very hearts, till they get vent by confeſſion and repentance: thus do we muſter up forces againſt our own peace. We pray, Lord deliver us from our enemies; and in that number we do wrap up our unthought of ſelves: for we are our own enemies. *Turn thine hand upon mine enemies*: for thou canſt do it with the turning of an hand: *Deliver me from the evil man*: who is that? ſaith S. *Auguſtine*: he is not far to ſeek: *libera me ab homine malo*, that is, *à meipſo*: deliver me from the evill man, that is, from my ſelf: I am the apteſt to beget

Iſa. 23. 7.

Pſal. 81. 14.

get destruction upon mine owne soul: no enemy could hurt us, if we were our own friends.

But we must not extend it so farre upon this holy King: they were thoughts indeed, and thoughts of sorrow, but of godly sorrow: and he calls them his own, to shew his neere acquaintance with them, *My* sorrowes. He was not a stranger to his own soul, his heart was not dead flesh. Satan had given him a fall, and he felt not that: sin had given him diverse falls, and he felt not them, neither: at last God undertakes him, wrastles with him, and he gives him a fall too: he felt that, yea and that made him feel all the rest. Now is he sensible of every pang and stitch: the least thorne makes him smart, and he cryes out of the multitude of his sorrowes. There be some that can drowne their griefes in wine and musick, as they did in *Hinnom*, the cry of the Infants with the noise of the Instruments: as if they would forget that they are the owners of their own thoughts, because they trouble them. Many deale with their soules, as some old women do with looking glasses: they turne the wrong side toward them, that they might not see the furrowes of their own faces. They are loath to think of a reckoning, least they should despaire of making even the arrerages. Men have the courage to dare to sin, but they dare not look on their soules as they are polluted with sin. I have heard of a melancholy man, that would not beleeve he had a head,

head, till his Physician made him a hat of lead, and put it on: which with the weight inforced him to cry, O his head. So men lost in sensuall pleasures, scarce remember that they have a soul within them, untill miseries, like talents of lead, or quarries of stone, with their heavy pressure squeese out a confession.

No things be so neer as a man and his soul: *Tota domus duo sunt*; the whole household is but two: yea, why should they be called two? we may say in a right sense, *Mens cujusque is est quisque*: every mans soul is himselfe. If there be any division, sin made it: a just punishment, *ut qui nollet cum Deo unus, non posset in semetipso non dividi.* All these quarrels and brawles may thanke sinne: that is the makebate betwixt God and us, betwixt us and our selves. But that man and his soul be grievously fallen out, that will not speak one to another: when he shall passe a whole day, and not aske his soul how she does: this were too much betwixt man and wife: when he shall lie down in his bed, as the beast doth in his litter, without bidding his soul good-night: when he shall have fowled and besmeared his soul with the nasty aspersions of lusts, and not sweep out the dust before he shut the door, not wash his soul with teares, before his eye-lids be closed down with slumber: yea, when he shall have wounded his soul with blasphemies and uncharitable injuries, and then throw it down in a deluge of drinke, as

it

it were weltring in the own gore, without calling for repentance, the Chirurgion to dreſſe it. What madneſſe and ſelfe-hatred is this? When the ſoul may not have leave to think over her own thoughts; to reflect upon her ſelf, to ſearch her own bruiſes, to ſurvey the multitude of her ſorrowes, and feel in what need ſhe ſtands of comforts? That, *Pleriſque notus, ignotus moriatur ſibi?* But the children of God have learned to commune with their own hearts, to examine every thought, and to weigh every deſire in the balance of the Sanctuary. Whether they find themſelves penſive or joyfull, they wil ſearch the cauſe: As *Rebecca* ſaid, when ſhe felt the children ſtruggle in her wombe, *Why am I thus?* Whether fear or hope, joy or pain have invaded my thoughts, let me aske my ſoul the reaſon, *Why am I thus?* The Fathers were excellent good at this: they had their confeſſions and Soliloquies, familiar conferences with their own hearts; that when a man reads them, hee would think they kept no other company but themſelves. Conference with others may make us wiſe or learned, but conference with our ſelves is the way to make us holy. Tell thy conſcience of all ſuggeſtions, as the chaſt wife (after ſome peremptory denyalls to her impudent Tempter) profeſſed to tell her husband of thoſe ſollicitations: ſuch and ſuch be my thoughts, thus and thus they haunt me, what ſhall I do with them? Indifferency is no leſſe then ſelfe-treachery, in matters of ſuch conſequence,

Gen. 25, 22.

that

that come ſo neere mee, as to bee *Apud me.*

4. *Within me*, for this is the field where the skirmiſh is fought; *within me.* It is unhappy when ſouldiers march over the palaces of peace and ſeats of Juſtice, where the Senators of counſell uſe to ſit. If there muſt be warre, yet let it be in forrain Countries: or if it will bee in our own land, yet let it proceed no further then the borders: but when it is gotten into the chiefe City, though it bee ſubdued, it will coſt a dear victory. As *Pyrrhus*, when his friends congratulated his victory over the Romans, with a great loſſe of his own ſide; replyed; yes, but if we have ſuch another victory, we are undone. There is no penitent heart, that hath felt the bitterneſſe of theſe combates, remembring what ſighes and ſorrows, what groanes and tears it coſt him to make his peace, but would be loth to be put to the charges of ſuch another conqueſt. *Durius ejicitur, quam non admittitur hoſtis*: ſinne may be kept out with eaſe, but will not bee driven out ſave with wofull expences.

Within me: not before mee, as the hoſt of the Philiſtims lay before *Saul*; not behind me, as the chariots of Egypt came thundring behind Iſrael: nor above me, as *Fabius Maximus* on the mountaine above *Hanibal*; *Imminet nubes*, a cloud hangs over me: not round about me, as the Syrians compaſſed *Dothan* to take *Eliſha*: but *within me*. *Without were fightings, within* 2 Cor. 7. 5.

were feares: and those fears within, were worse then those fightings without. There are externall calamities able enough to shake the most fortified soul: but *Summus dolor ab intus.* Saint *Paul* reckons up twelve of his inflicted sufferings, nine dangers, eight continued passions: yet as if all these were scarce worth putting into the catalogue, he addes; *Besides the things that are without*, he had an inward trouble: the care of the Churches, seeking the lost, rebuking the proud, comforting the dejected: here was the pain.

2 Cor. 11. 28.

Within me. There may be *Bellum intestinum*, a kind of unkind battell; where *victi victoresque invicem dolent*: the soul bespeaking her affections, as *Jocasta* did her quarrelling sons,

Bella geri placuit, nullos habitura triumphos.

According to our Saviours prediction; *A mans foes shall be they of his owne household.* *Intra me est, quod contra me est*: that is within mee, which is against me. We say, he wants an enemy that fights with himself: and because he fights with himselfe, he wants no enemy: *Sibi pessimus hostis.* With externall assaults we may grapple, threatned mischiefes we may prevent; from persecutours too potent for us, we may hide us: but who shall keep us from our selves? *Nescis temeraria, nescis quem fugias, ideoque fugis*: Whithersoever wee remove, we carry our sorrowes with us. Outward afflictions are a warre, turbulent affections a worse warre: both against us, but this later is within us. He needs

Matth. 10. 36. *Aug.*

no

no other misery, that is troubled within himselfe. Aske not the anger of heaven, nor the trouble of earth, nor the dangers of the sea, nor the malice of hell, against him whom the anguish of his own thoughts have beaten down. He will say to all other miserable complainers, you are happy. Outward things may go crosse with us, and yet the peace of the soul remaine sound: but *a wounded spirit who can beare?* who can cure? As mans heart is the first that lives, and the last that dies: so it is the first that Satan assaults, and the last that he gives over. Yea, were there never a divel, the heart hath an ill spirit of its own to vex it. As some Boroughs of this Land plead a priviledge, that they can hang and draw within themselves: Mans heart is such a corporation; it can execute it self within it self, without any forrain Judge or executioner. If wee look no further then among the multitude of our thoughts; might we not make a shift to think our selves to hell? If we had neither hands, nor eyes, nor feet, would not our hearts find the way thither!

Within me. The proper seat and lodging of these troublesome inmates, the thoughts of sorrow, is the heart: whithersoever they wander, there they center. Vagabonds taken roguing out of their own precincts, are sent with a passport to the Town where they were borne: there they must be kept. Extravagant thoughts may rove up and down, but back again they must to the heart: the house that hatched them, must harbour

bour them, must answer for them. As all faculties of sense have their severall seats: *seeing* is confined to the the eyes, *hearing* to the ears, *feeling* to the flesh and sinews: so these perturbations are limited to the heart. The locall seat of the sensitive apprehension is the braine; of the sensitive affection, the heart. In the former is softnesse and moisture, fit to receive intelligible formes: in the other are fiery spirits, fittest for passionate and affectionate thoughts. *My spirit is overwhelmed, and my heart within me is disolate*: In such a distresse, let sense informe reason, reason speak to will, will to conscience, conscience to faith, faith to Christ, and Christ to his Father; and they will both send the holy Ghost to comfort us. If there bee a fire in the heart of a City, all the suburbs will come in to quench it. This fire may burne within, but it will breake out. It is as easie to stifle thunder in the cloud, or fire in powder, as sorrow in the heart. It will have eruption, either by the voice in cryes, or by the eyes in tears, or by the speaking silence of the look in a dejected heavinesse. The seat of sorrow is the soule; but it will overflow the boundaries. *Why art thou cast downe, O my soule?* None aske their eyes why they weep, or their voices why they lament, or their hands why they wring themselves: but *Anima, quare tam tristis? O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me?*

Psalm 143.4.

Psalm 43.5.

We

We see now the full advancement of the misery; The thoughts of sorrow, an *Army* of those thoughts, the *combination* of that army, the *terror* of that combination: how miserably must the Country suffer where these rebels march? who can tell the taking of that heart, which feels this combustion within it selfe? These be our enemies, where are our friends? The day is like to be fatally disastrous, if we have no defensive forces. Yes, the *Lord shall fight for us, and we will hold our peace*: as *Moses* comforted Israel when the choice was hard; whether to trust the fury of the sea before them, or of the Egyptians behind them; *Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord; Thy comforts delight my soul.* Now are the white ensignes of mercy displayed against these bloody streamers: never to a handfull of men almost famished in a fort, did the tidings of fresh aid to raise the siege, arrive more welcome. *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not dyed.* Though this *multitude* of oppressours overlay my heart, yet Lord, if thou comest, my soul shall not perish. Let your patience sit out the successe of the battell; and though I wish you not such conflicts; yet if they do come, may you never fail of such comforts. *Thy comforts delight my soul.*

Exo. 14. 4.

John 11. 21.

1. *Quanta*, They are no lesse then *comforts*: not presumptions, nor promises, nor meer hopes, but solid and sensible *comforts*. God made *comfort* on purpose for sorrow: as mercy would

would want a ſubject to exerciſe upon, but for miſery. The bleſſed Angels are not ſaid to bee *comforted* (as we uſe the word) becauſe they never knew what heavineſſe meant: they are conſerved, they are confirmed, not (properly) *comforted*. There may be joy without any antecedent ſorrow; as the Angelicall ſpirits ever were, and ever ſhall be filled with unſpeakable joy. But *comfort* is the proper phyſick for trouble; this happy nature was not ordained but for ſorrow. There be ſome that *ducunt in bonis dies ſuos*, that have their wayes ſtrawed with roſes and violets, who move onely the paces of pleaſure: theſe have no need of *Comfort*. What Phyſician miniſters cordialls to the ſtrong and healthfull conſtitution? It is the broad throughfare of the world, which the Divell is ſo ſtudious to ſmooth, that he leaves not a pebble in the way to offend them: as if he were that tutelar Angel, who hath a charge to look to them, *that they daſh not their foot againſt a ſtone*. If they ſigh, he ſings to them: if they ſleep, he ſits by them; whiſpering to all troubles, (as the Spouſe to the daughters of Jeruſalem) *I charge you*, O ye tranſgreſſions of his heart, *waken him not till he pleaſe*: Let there be no noiſe of fear, no alarme of repentance, no ſuſurration of conſcience to moleſt him: peace, peace, lie down in peace, with thy warme ſinnes cleaving to thy boſome. The Prophet gives you their character; *They lie upon beds of ivory, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and calves out of the*

Pſal. 91. 12.

Cant. 8. 4.

Amos 6. 4.

the ſtall, they chant to the ſound of viols, and daunce to *Inſtruments, and drinke wine in bowls*; what ſhould theſe men do with *comforts*? Joy, and nothing elſe but the voice of joy reſounds in their habitations. It is *poor afflicted Joſeph*, not they, that needs *comfort*.

Conſolation then is made for ſorrow; and not for every ſorrow neither. Some is produced by no other cauſe but temporall loſſes, paines or injuries: ſo *Eſau* may mourn long enough without recovery of his Fathers bleſſing. *Worldly ſorrow bringeth death*, not delight to the ſoul. Many weep, as *Rachel* did in *Ramah*, for her children, Matth. 2.18. becauſe they were not: but they neither are, nor ever will be comforted. There are tears that got ſinfull *Eſau* nothing, and there be tears that got ſinfull *Mary* ſalvation. If the ſorrow that ſwells our boſome with ſighes, and is ready to burſt our hearts, be ſpent upon our ſins, it ſhall be ſure of *comforts*. Are we full of griefe within, and find no vent but by the groanes and tears of repentance? God may let us bleed for a while, till we be throughly humbled: but then, like the woman, the pangs of whoſe travell be over, the ſonne of joy ſhall be borne in our ſouls, even that ſon which the bleſſed Virgin bore from her womb; *Filius dilectionis, Filius delectationis*, Jeſus Chriſt.

2. *Quota*, there is a plurality of them; many *Comforts*. What ſhould encounter with ſorrow, but *comfort*? *Comfort* therefore it is for the nature. What ſhould oppoſe a *multitude*, but a *multi-*

multitude? Many *comforts* therefore they are for their number. Are we troubled with the wants and miseries of this life? we have a comfort for that: *The Lord is my portion: He is my ſhepherd, I ſhall lack nothing.* Do we ſinke under the burden of our tranſgreſſions? we have a comfort for that: *Mary Magdalen* heard it, to quiet all her ſtormes; *Thy ſinnes are forgiven thee.* Are we haunted with temptations, hurried with perſecutions? we have a comfort for this; *I will be with thee in trouble*, ſaith the Lord. Let your Chriſtian experience ſupply here my defects of remonſtrance: I will ſumme up theſe comforts in a word: *The Lord is gracious, and mercifull, ſlow to anger, and of great kindneſſe, and repenteth him of the evill.* We read of certain *Fair havens* neere *Candie*: here be five fountains of *comfort*, like thoſe faire havens; as welcome for harbour and rode of a ſea-beaten conſcience, as ever the boſome of mother was to the tender Infant. Drink at the firſt fountain, *The Lord is gracious*, free in his favours: if your thirſt be not ſatisfied, go to the ſecond; He is *mercifull*, he hath bowels of commiſeration: if not yet, preſſe to the next; He is *ſlow to anger*, hard to conceive it, not willing to retaine it: wiſh we more? Hee is *of great kindneſſe*, in the number and meaſure of his bleſſings: There is yet another well of *comfort* behind; *Repenting him of the evill*: full often doth he turne aſide his blowes, and is eaſily intreated to have the rod pull'd out of his hands.

Joel 2. 13.

Acts 27 8.

hands. *David*, to encounter with the Gyant, took *five ſmooth ſtones out of the brooke*: here is the brooke, and theſe the five ſmooth ſtones: let them not lie in the channel unuſed, but put them in your veſſels, bear them in your hearts: whenſoever you are defied and aſſaulted by that monſtrous Philiſtim, Satan; one of theſe *comforts*, like *Davids* ſtone, ſhall ſink into his forehead, and confound him. 1 Sam. 17. 40.

How happily do theſe *comforts* meet with thoſe ſorrowes! we are troubled with the ſenſe of our ſins, and of Gods Judgment upon them: how ſhould his Juſtice acquit us? yet there is *comfort*; *the Lord is gracious*, and cannot deny himſelf. But we are unworthy of this grace, becauſe wee have turned it into wantonneſſe: yet there is *comfort*: he is *mercifull*, and ſheweth moſt pity where is moſt need. But we have multiplied offences, and continued in our ſins to our gray hairs: yet there is *comfort*: He is *ſlow to anger*, evermore bleſſed for his long ſufferance. But our iniquities be not of an ordinary quality, they are hainous and intolerable: yet there is *comfort*, for he is *of great kindneſſe*; our wickedneſſe cannot be ſo great as his *kindneſſe*: of that there is no comprehenſion. But we are out of his favour, becauſe he hath ſmitten us, our bodies with ſore diſeaſes, our ſouls with agonies, our families with privations: yet their is *comfort*, he *will repent of the evil*. In the hour of death, when the ſenſes are paſt working, the underſtanding aſleep, the body in a cold and benummed ſweat, theſe *com-*

Psalm 116. 7. forts never leave us, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul.*

Our *comforts* vie number with our sorrowes, and win the game. The mercies of God pass'd over in a grosse summe, breed no admiration; but cast up the particulars, and then Arithmetick is too dull an art to number them. As many dusts as a mans hand can hold, is but his handfull of so many dusts: but tell them one by one, and they exceed all numeration. It was but a crowne which King *Solomon* wore: but weigh the gold, tell the precious stones, value the richnesse of it; what was it then? *Jerusalem* was but a city: but goe round about it, marke the towers, tell the bulwarks, observe the magnificent buildings: so consider the infinite variety of these *comforts!*

Psal. 66. 16. *Come, and I will tell you what God hath done for my soul:* I never felt that sorrow, for which hee

2 Chron. 32. 8. gave me not a soveraign *comfort*. *Sennacherib* invaded Israel with a mighty host, yet the undaunted courage of *Hezekiah* found more with him, then could be against him: and *Sennacherib* found it so too, to his cost, when he lost almost two hundred thousand of his army in one night. The Prophets servant rising early in the morning, sees the City besieged with a fearfull host of foot, horse, chariots: his eyes could meet with nothing but woods of pikes, walls of harnesse, and lustre of metalls, and hee runs in with

2 Kings 6. 16. this affrighting newes to his Master, *Alas, what shall wee doe?* Quiet *Elisha* sits in his chamber as secure, as if all these had been the guard

guard of Israel, sent for his safe protection; *Fear not.* This was an hard precept: as well might he have bidden him not to see what he saw, as not to fear seeing so dreadfull a spectacle. But the taske is easie, if the next words find beleefe; *They that be with us, are more then they that be with them.* If the eyes of our faith be as open as those of our sense, to see Angels as well as Syrians, to perceive *comforts as well as sorrowes*, we cannot be appalled with the most unequall number of enemies. *Many, O Lord, are thy wonderfull works which thou hast done for us, they cannot be reckoned. O God, what is man, that thou art so mindfull of him?* Yea, O man, what is God, that thou art so unmindfull of him? *All the workes of God are excellent, and ought to bee had in remembrance*: alas, that wee should ever forget any of these workes, that are of mercy and *comfort* which hee hath done for our souls: For he alone hath done them: that is the next point. Psalm 40. 5.

3. *Cujus*, whose they are; *Thy* comforts. Troubles may be of our own begetting: but true comforts come onely from that infinite fountain, *the God of consolation*; for so he hath stiled himself. The eagle at her highest flight will not lose the sight of her young ones: if she perceive any danger approaching, down she comes amain to their defence. Christ is indeed ascended up on high; yet he hath a favourable eye to his servants below: no *Saul can breath out threataings* against them, without a *Quid me persequeris?*

Nec timeas hoſtem fortem, qui Ducem habes fortiorem: Let God ariſe, and let his enemies be ſcattered: There is none that fighteth for us, but only thou O God. *Cujuſquam eſt rem publicam movere, Dei ſolius quietare.* Our owne hearts can diſtract themſelves, there is nothing to ſettle them, but what the God of peace puts in. Who can reconcile a man fallen out with himſelf? yea, fallen from himſelf? None but the God of comfort: who when the earth was void, without form, darkneſſe on the face of the deep; day and night, land & water undiſtinguiſhed, could reduce all this miſhapen chaos of the world to form and order: when father, mother, brethren, kinred, friends, neighbours, and a mans own heart forſakes him, then God takes him up. The ſtructure of *Jericho* was not more pleaſant, then the waters were unwholſome, and thereby the ſoile corrupt: *Eliſha* cures them with a cruſe-full of ſalt: Our hearts are ful of thoughts, but they be noxious: yet if God throw into thoſe fountains a handfull of ſaving grace, we ſhall bee whole. Our ſorrowes too often would break our hearts, but (O God) for thy comforts: it is thou onely that canſt make theſe weake veſſels hold ſuch ſcalding liquours, and not burſt.

Pſalm 68.1.

There is combuſtion of theſe thoughts within us, til God part the fray, and pacifie the tumult: as when ſcholers are loud in brawls, the very ſight of their maſter huſheth them. When my heart, like the ſea in a ſtorm, is troubled; the winds raging, the waves roring; *Thy* comforts, like Chriſts command,

mand, turns all into a calme. *I thought on thee in the night ſeaſon, and received comfort.* In the night, the region of fear: in darkneſſe, the opportunity of deſpaire: in ſolitarineſſe, the full advantage of ſorrow: upon an unſleeping bed, the field of troublous thoughts: yet I did but think on thee, and before I came to meditate, to pray, to ſend up my ſoul unto thee, in that firſt thought *I received comfort.* O how ſhort do all worldly things come of this ſufficiency? If the heart bee wounded with ſorrow, in vain is all the Chirurgery of nature. Gold is no reſtorative, riches no cordial, yea they may be a corroſive: wee ſay to wine, thy ſpirits are dull; to laughter, thou art mad: muſick grates the ear, and phyſick loathes the palate: company is tedious, and ſolitude dangerous: alas, what hope can there be, till the God of comfort comes? *Sauls* evil ſpirit will not leave him, til he be diſpoſſeſſed by *Davids* harpe: wee finde as much eaſe, when wee reſt our hearts upon temporall things, as hee that laid him downe to reſt upon the cold earth, with a pitcher under his head: and finding the pillow too hard, he roſe and ſtopped it with feathers, thinking that then it would be wondrous eaſie. So be all temporary things to the ſoul, even when they are filled with the choiceſt mirth, nothing but vanity and vexation of ſpirit: not only vanity in their entertainment, but vexation in their farewell. Yet, O Lord, *Thy* comforts

4. *Delight the ſoul*; which is the laſt circumſtance, the

the effect of all. All Gods warre is for peace: *Pacem habet voluntas, bellum neceſsitas.* Wee ſhould never have felt ſuch a conflict, if God had not intended us ſuch a conqueſt. Sin diſquiets the heart; yet through his grace, this diſquiet breeds repentance, repentance procureth forgiveneſs, forgiveneſſe reſtoreth peace, and peace *delights the ſoul.* The ſharpeneſſe of the trouble advanceth the ſweetneſſe of the joy: as *Chriſts ſufferings abound, ſo his comforts ſuperabound.* Every penitent tear that falls from the eye, ſprings up a flower of comfort. Look how full the veſſells
John 2.7. were of water, ſo full doth our Saviour render them of wine. In hell are all ſorrowes without any comforts: in heaven are all comforts, without any ſorrowes: on earth, good and bad, ſweet and ſowre, miſeries and mercies, ſorrowes and comforts are blended together. If here were nothing but ſorrows, earth would be thought hell; if nothing but comforts, it would bee thought heaven. But that we may know it to be, as indeed it is, neither heaven nor hell, but between both, and the way to either; we have a viciſſitude of troubles and delights. That as of old they painted King *Solomon*; becauſe learned men were divided in their opinions of him; ſome caſting him to hell, others advancing him to heaven: therefore a third moderate ſort painted him halfe in heaven, and halfe in hell: ſo the Chriſtian, in regard of his ſorrowes, ſeems halfe confounded; and in reſpect of his comforts, halfe ſaved. But as indeed, *Solomon* after all his errors

errors found mercy; so the Christian after all his sorrowes shall find comfort. His beginning may seem troublesome, his proceeding not delightsome, but his later end is peace. *Marke the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.* His heart was troubled, his *soul* shall be *delighted.* Psalm 47.37.

As the grievances of the soul bee most dangerous in respect of their nature, so they are also abundant in their number. Therefore let our care be to seek out that great *Elixar*, that most soveraign and universall Antidote and Cordiall.

One soul complaines; I have obloquies, reproaches, calamniations cast upon me, which render me contemptible to good societies. Morality would thus argue with the heart. Bee these imputations, thus charged upon me, true or false? If true, let the integrity of thy future conversation so convince thy associates, that they shall both suspect those reports, and rest assured of thy constant goodnesse. 1.

But the Divine grace applies a more virtuall medicine to thy conscience, which shall revive, either thy patience, or thy repentance. The soul shall argue with it self: If these imputations be true, here is work for my repentance; I will *weep in secret for my sins.* If false, let them not trouble me: It is the slanderers sin, not mine: neither am I bound to father anothers bastard. But still upon this calumnie, the world condemns me: but thy faith and patience assures thee, that

that thou ſhalt *not be condemned with the world.* Yea, there is yet a higher degree of honour belonging to thy patience. Have not the beſt men been traduced? Was not the beſt of men, God and man blaſphemed? yea even upon the Croſſe, he was jeered when he dyed, by ſome of them for whom he dyed. Thus do the comforts of God requite thee; that in all this thou art (in thy meaſure) *conformable to the ſufferings of Chriſt.* So doſt thou allay all theſe furious tempeſts with one breath of faithfull ejaculation; *Thy comforts delight my ſoul.*

2. Another complains; I am fallen from an affluent eſtate, to deep indigence. I have kept hoſpitality, to entertain friends: and made charity the Porch of my houſe, to relieve the needy ones. The veſſell of my meanes is now drawn out to the bottom, there is not ſufficient proviſion left for my own family.

Inquire of thy heart, whether this decay did not come by thy own riot, or through the vainglorious affectation of an abundant hoſpitality. If this, or that, or any other habituall ſin, were the cauſe of it, begin with mortification there. Firſt, mourne for thy ſinnes: then faithfully depend upon thy Creators providence, and thou canſt not faile of convenient ſuſtenance.

But it may be, that this is not the complainants caſe: he is not taken with a tabe or waſting of his ſubſtance; like a ſcarce ſenſible conſumption of his

his bodily vitalls. But his fall is with a precipice; from a ſublime Pinacle of honour, to a deep puddle of penury. Such was *Jobs* condition, ſo did he fall; from being rich and happy in the Adverb, to be poor and miſerable even to a Proverb. He had not only abundance of good about him; but *Omnia bene*, all went well with him. Yet how ſuddenly did he fall from this abundant proſperity, to the depth of miſerable poverty! Did he now follow the ſuggeſtions of that corrupt nature, which lay in his boſome, and whiſpered to him on his pillow; *Curſe God and die?* No, but he apprehended the inſpiration of grace; *Bleſſe God, and live.* So his laſt dayes were better then his firſt. That infinite mercy did ſo crown his patience with triumph, that his temporall eſtate was doubled. Yea, but what poſterity had hee left to enjoy it after him? Yes, for even the number of his children was doubled too. For beſides thoſe ſeven Sons and three Daughters, which were now with his Father in Heaven; he had alſo ſeven Sons and three Daughters with himſelfe upon Earth. Piety and Patience cannot bee caſt downe ſo low, but that the hand of mercy can raiſe it up againe. *In the multitude* of all my loſſes and croſſes, O Lord *thy Comforts have delighted my ſoul.*

But another, that hath heard all this ſad Story, and ſeen the comfortable end ſent of the Lord, is not ſatisfied, becauſe 3

himſelf is not redreſſed. Like a coward in wars that looks for the victory, before he gives one ſtroke in the battell. What merchant looks to be landed in the place of traffick, before he hath paſt his adventure upon the ſeas? Still ſaith ſuch a repiner; I am in diſtreſſe, and want even neceſſaries. But ſtill, thou, and we all, muſt ſuffer much more, before it can be ſaid of us, *Here is the faith and patience of the Saints.* Still O my ſoul, wait thou upon the Lord, thy moſt faithfull Creator: he will in his good pleaſure, open his hand, and *fill thee with plenteouſneſſe.* Be thou penitent before him, patient under him, confident in him, and thou ſhalt have abundant cauſe to bee thankfull to him: *Thy end ſhall bee peace*, and *comfort in Jeſus Chriſt.*

Yea, even now, in this dead low waters of fugitive fortunes, my ſoul confeſſeth, that I have the higheſt wealth. For Chriſts righteouſneſſe is my riches, his merits is my inexhauſtible exchequer, his blood hath filld my veins with moſt lively vigour. My treaſure is in heaven, where no violence can take it from me. Stil and forever, O God, *thy comforts delight my ſoul.*

4. It is anothers complaint; I am ſhut up in a cloſe priſon, where I can neither converſe with others abroad, nor let in others to communicate with me, in this my confined home. The ſparrow on the houſe-top hath more freedome then I; For that, though wanting a mate, hath an

an open aire to flie in, and may so invite company to solace her, I have no society, but my disconsolate thoughts: no friend, to ask me so much, as how I do?

Yet is thy soul at liberty: no barricadoed walls, no iron-gates or grates, no darke dungeons can imprison that. The Jail is a strong prison to thy body, and thy body is but (in a metaphoricall phrase) a prison to thy soul; Thy body may not walke abroad, thy soul can. Spite of all thy cruell creditors, and some unmercifull Jailors; she can break Prison: She hath wings that can mount her through clouds and mountains, through orbs and constellations, and (like to *Enoch*) *walke with God*, in a heavenly contemplation of his infinite goodnesse. My ears cannot hear those airy Choristers, singing their Creators praise in the groves: my soul, in speculation, can hear the Anthems of Angels in heaven. I may not hear the *Hosanna's* of the Church militant in our materiall Temples below: I may conceive, that my soul hears the *Hallelujahs* of the Church triumphant above. I may not walk in the green pastures, and flowry medows on earth: my soul may move in the glorious and melodious galleries of heaven. Thus O Lord, though in my strictest confinement here below, thou hast given me large liberty above. Still I will glorifie thee for all thy mercies, for *thy comforts delight my soul.*

Anothers complaint is; I am vexed with a 5.

multitude of troubles. Not the law of the ſword, but the ſword of the law hath diſquieted me. Let thy ſoul aske thy conſcience this queſtion: who did firſt breake the peace? If thou haſt firſt overwhelmed that truth, which ſhould bee apparent, thou art thine own enemy: For truth ſmothered in wet ſtraw, will at length overcome the dankneſſe of that ſuppreſſion, and ſet on fire the ſmotherers. Thou haſt forſaken the truth, and art therefore forſaken of peace.

There bee two chief preſervers of the ſoul, under the Almighty Creator of it; Truth and Peace. How invaluable are they together; Parted, how miſerable! truth is the precious ſtone: Peace, the gold, wherein it is both ſet and preſerved. Truth is the glorious light of the Sun; Peace, a clear and ſerene heaven. Peace is a moſt beautifull body, whilſt it containes Truth, that more lovely ſoul. Truth brings downe heaven to us, Peace bears us up to heaven. Both are ſiſters, the daughters of one Father, God himſelf.

Do thou firſt recover truth: by continuall labour ſeeke it, with prayers and teares begg it, with the expenſe of much ſorrow buy it, and then peace will come in to the bargaine: Gods *comfort* ſhall again *delight thy ſoul.*

6. Another complaines; I am caſt out of doors: I have no harbour but the hedges; nor lodg-

lodging, but the fruitleſs ground. Poverty hath ſent out her excommunication againſt me: all that have an eſtate, are forewarned to ſhun my company.

Conſider, when had *Jacob* ſo ſweet a nights reſt, as when the pillow he laid his head upon was a hard ſtone? Then was that ladder ſet by him, by which his ſoul might climbe up to heaven in a viſion, whereof before he had but the ſpeculation. The Angels were dancing thoſe meaſures, and ſinging thoſe raptures about him, which did in a manner angelifie him. His body lay on the bare earth, his ſoul with thoſe ſpirituall wings of faith and love, was mounted above the clouds, above the orbs, even converſant in the higheſt heavens.

When had *Elias* more excellent proviſion then when his breakfaſt was brought him in the morning, and his ſupper in the evening, by a raven? The meſſenger was homely, but the dyet was heavenly. It came from the table of that great King, whoſe hoſpitality feeds, not only men; but even the fouls of the air, the beaſts upon earth, and the fiſhes in the ſea. The Prophets lodging was but a Field-bed, yet even then and there, the Lyons were a guard about him, the tutelar Angels did round him, and the Divine providence preſerved him.

If we be deſtitute of other lodging, and be driven to the common earth, yet we have a houſe over

over our heads, *not made with hands*, but *an eternall manſion in the heavens.* There is alſo a canopy for us, a roof arched over with the two Poles, and ſet with innumerable gliſtering ſtarrs. Yea; there is an omnipotent love that protects us; a materiall heaven encompaſſing us, and a ſpirituall heaven within us, the peace of a good conſcience, aſſuring us of our eternall ſalvation through Chriſt Jeſus. This is a ſofter lodging then the cabbins of merchants, or the Hamachs of ſea-farers; yea then the moſt curious beds that the harbengers can provide for Princes. O how ſweetly doth the Chriſtian reſt, when he hears that voice from the Oracle of goodneſſe; *My grace is ſufficient for thee, My comforts ſhall delight thy ſoul.*

7. But anothers complaint is; I am perplexed with ſickneſſe: I am a marke againſt which paine ſhoots his arrows: I waſt away with languiſhments, as ice is diſſolved by heat into water. Reſt patient; this conſumption ſhall be conſumed. Death, that univerſall executioner of mankind, ſhall be executed. Time ſhall cut off Death, and Eternity ſhall make an end of Time. Death ſhall have no grave left for his monument, or trophee of his victories: and *the Angel hath ſworn, that time ſhall be no more.* Thy ſickneſſe may outlaſt thy Phyſician, but thy ſoul ſhall outlive thy ſickneſſe, and nothing ſhall outlive thy ſoul.

But the pangs of my body are ſo violent, that they aſſault me with diſtraction. Fear not:

they

they may beleaguer thee with diſtruſt, but never overcome that faith, which thou putteſt in this God of conſolation. He is a moſt faithfull Creator, and will *ſervare depoſitum*, keep that ſoul ſafe, with which the beleever hath inſtruſted him. The breaches of the body are the ſouls windows, and afford her a more clear proſpect into heaven, inkindling her with an ardent deſire to be with God in glory. *Jobs* abundant ſores would have bred in him a continuity of ſorrowes; but for that antidote of faith, and ſaving cordiall of hope, that his *eyes* ſhould ſee his *Redeemer* in bleſſedneſſe.

The ſmiling Sunne flatters the traveller out of his cloake, whereas the robuſtious wind cauſeth him to wrap it the cloſer about him. God forbid that Chriſtian Religion ſhould bee but a cloake: yet the outward profeſſion of it is ſomwhat looſned by wanton healths, and ſickneſs wins it more inwardly to the heart. Experienced merchants tell us, that in the hotteſt Countreys, they find moſt comfort in the hotteſt drinks. A wonder to us that live in the cold climates: but that the Suns adventitions heat ſo ſucks out the radicall moiſture and ſpirits, that it leaves the heart feeble, and deſtitute of the naturall comforts. It is a maxime in Philoſophy, that one heat avocates another: the greater, the leſſe. The heat of the Sun drawes forth the heat of the heart, and leaves it fainting. Poor *Lazarus* with his ſcraps and ſcabs, was yet in a better condition then the rich man with his

Princely

Princely Wardrobe, and his coſtly Viands. Continued health hath maintained wanton deſires and delights upon earth: but ſickneſſe hath ſent many ſouls up to Heaven. Yea Lord, even with ſickneſſe afflict my body, ſo that thy Heavenly *Comforts do delight my ſoul.*

8. It is a generall complaint; Afflictions environ me. In my ſhort pilgrimage, through the ſharp wilderneſſe of this world, on the one ſide the Thorns wound me, the Briers and Brambles ſcratch me on the other. This is not only the deſerved penalty of ſinfull nature; *Man is born to trouble as the ſparks flie upwards.* But even a kind of fatality inſeparable to militant grace; *All that will live godly in Chriſt, ſhall ſuffer perſecution.* That is a rare path upon earth, which hath never a rub: and a calm paſſage by water, that eſcapes all moleſtation. But more,

2 Tim. 3. 12

Be there not ſome Afflictions, that conduce much to our preſervation? We have found, that the falling into one grievous ſin, the worſt of all dangers, hath brought us to repentance, one of the beſt preſervatives. I have heard ſome Seamen report by experience, that in a tempeſt, ſome raging billow hath ſwept a man from off the Decks into the maine Ocean: yet another wave on the other ſide, hath toſſed him up into the ſhip again: ſo that he was only drenched, but not drowned. The violent preſſure of one Affliction hath ſunk a man to diſtruſt in God: another with a more furious Storme hath left him deſtitute of all earthly ſuccour: He now reſolves, the world hath forſaken

ken me, I will never look for relief from it. But my God hath not forsaken me, he never will forsake them that trust in him through Jesus Christ. To him I flie, upon him I rely: he will not suffer me to perish. Still, O Lord, in all my extremities *Thy comforts delight my soul.*

Not offering to number mans grievances, which be innumerable; there is yet the last, and it may prove the best, complaint remaining.

I am perplexed with the wofull consideration of my sins; those *bitter things which God writes against me*, the irkesome recollection of my transgressions. I can argue with Philosophers, consult with Politicians, hear the ingenious fancies of Poets, reason in domestick concernments, enjoy the company of morall and harmless friends with delight. I can pray with confidence to be heard, and satisfied; I do hope with some assurance of salvation; I sleep upon a peacefull pillow, Thus far I am in a calm and serene hemisphere, and quiet be all my thoughts. 9

But after all this Sunshine, there ariseth a tempest. When I do recollect, or be represented unto my conscience, my innumerable, incomparable, intollerable sinnes; the remembrance of them is so frightfull, the burden of them is so unsupportable, that I dare not even look up unto Heaven. Faith lies fainting, hope is in a swoon, fear stands by the bed side, despaire lies gaping at the chamber door, my soul is in an extasie. I am weary of all company, but those that speak of mercy. I sit mourning all the day

long: Sorrow and ſolitude are my aſſociates: I do ſhed ſome tears, and would weep tears of blood for my ſins. I lament becauſe my ſorrows are not greater for offending my God.

Well, yet hear the Phyſician of ſouls ſpeaks to thee from Heaven. Weep on, bleed on, this bleeding ſhall not be unto death. *Jeſus Chriſt* hath a Balſome, that ſhall not onely ſtanch thy bleeding, but fill the veins of thy ſoul with comfort. His blood is an Antidote for thine. One drop of that ſhall ſatisfie for more ſins, then ever thou haſt committed.

Weep on for thy Tranſgreſſions: Thoſe flouds of tears ſhall not drown thee. Yea rather, like the waters of that univerſall Deluge, in that ſaving Arke Chriſt Jeſus, they ſhall bear up thy ſoul higher towards Heaven. They ſhall not drowne thee, yea they ſhall rather ſave thee from being drowned. This is that *Secunda Tabula*, after ſhipwrack; the main plank that ſhall preſerve thee from periſhing, emergent repentance.

There be two moſt Valiant and Puiſſant ſouldiers, that are the Souls Champions, Faith and Repentance. They fight not only againſt luſt and ſin, thoſe Gyants of the world: but even againſt Principalities and Powers, thoſe infernall ſpirits of darkneſſe. Faith hath her weapons and Forces, but Repentance hath many diſadvantages.

1. Other Souldiers fight ſtanding, ſhe kneeling: They in a poſture confronting their enemies, ſhe in humiliation, though not tergiverſation from her

her oppoſites. They ſend forth their meſſengers of death in thundring ordnance: all her thunder is ſighs and groans ſent up to Heaven for mercies. They let flie their fiery Engines of deſtruction: ſhe hath only her ejaculations: Her moſt piercing darts, be broken hearts. Their ſhafts are winged with fire, her arrows are feathered with water, her own ſoft tears. They ſwallow up the hope of victory with inſultation: ſhe in an humble proſtration expects pity. Yet the God of all power and mercy, whom ſhe beleaguers in Heaven, yeilds her the conqueſt. He comes from his inpregnable Throne by his moſt gracious favour, and inſteed of confounding her as a Rebel, he uſeth her as a Friend, or Daughter. He takes her up from her knees, he wipes away all her tears, he folds her in his armes, he ſeals her a pardon of all ſins, and aſſures her of an everlaſting Kingdom in Heaven. O victorious Repentance! yea rather, O triumphant Goodneſſe! O God, *Teipſum vincis*, thou even overcomeſt thy ſelf, that *thy Comforts may delight our ſouls.*

It is reported of *Alexander*, that when he thought (and did but think ſo) he had conquered all this world, he fell a weeping, that there were no more worlds to conquer. But there was remaining another world, a better then ever *Alexander* diſcovered. But this was not for an *Alexander* by force of Armes, but for a *Mary Magdalen* by force of tears, to overcome.

It is true, that *the Kingdome of Heaven ſuffers violence*: but the way of Conqueſt is not through

the blood of bodies, but through a floud of tears, guſhing out for our ſins. This is ſuch a ſtratagem of war, ſuch a policy of Conqueſt, as the great Monarchs of the world never underſtood: Yet even this *through faith overcomes the world.*

Faith hath a plot, which ſhee hath taught her daughter Repentance, *Concedendo ſuperare*, to overcome by yeilding. It is a ſtratagem among Wraſtlers, that if a man can get himſelf under his antagoniſt, he lifts him up, the ſooner to caſt him down; yea, to give him the greater fall. Repentance ſtoops as low as ſhe can: ſhe lies, like *Joſhuah*, upon the bare earth, yea wallowes in duſt and aſhes. She holds her ſelf not worthy to be Gods foot-ſtool: let him trample upon her, and tread her under his feet, ſhe ſtill holds him by the feet, waſheth them with her tears, and wipeth them with the hairs of her head, and kiſſeth them, though ſhe be ſpurned by them. Doth this humble proſtration provoke fury? No, it rather invites mercy. *Parcere proſtratis ſcit nobilis ira Leonis*: The Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah*, will ſpare ſuch Lambs of humiliation; and in the paſtures of conſolation, he will both feed and preſerve them. That thunder which diſſolves the ſtubborn mettall, yet ſpares the yeilding purſe: When power and policy have ſpent their ſpirits, ſubmiſsion is found the only way of Conqueſt. The feafull thunder of vengeance is reſiſted by the ſoft wool of repentance.

2. Yet hath this bleſſed grace another diſadvantage. Faith, the chief of all the Forces, may be

be ſomtimes benighted, through the conglomeration of the clouds condenſed by our ſins. Hope may be eclipſed, by the interpoſition of the earth, our worldly imaginations, betwixt us and that great luminary of heaven, *the Sun of righteouſneſſe*; The century of watchful conſcience, may be overcome with ſecurity. Sin is a ſubtile enemy, and his father, the Divel wil ſhew him the opportunity. Now is the time of invaſion: ſeiſe on them, and cut all their throats. What ſhal repentance now do, when faith, the great Lady general droops; and Hope, her Lieutenant general is fainting? when the whole century is overcome with ſlumber?

Yes, there is a watchman in the tower of the ſoul, that doth ſeldom ſleep, holy Fear. He wakens conſcience, conſcience cals up faith, faith rouzeth hope, hope cryes aloud to repentance, repentance troops all the ſpiritual forces, the martial muſick gives the alarm, the ſouldiers are in battel-array, the enemies flie, the mind is at peace, becauſe Gods *comforts have delighted the ſoul.*

3. One diſadvantage more makes dangerous work for repentance. The troops of faith are routed, one wing of hope is cut off. Yet this conquering Queen of the *Viragines*, or maiden-graces, alwayes bears up the Rear, and never appeares till the day be almoſt loſt. When thoſe great Commanders, Innocency and Righteouſneſſe are foiled, and beaten, and have their Queen the ſoul, in danger to bee taken and ſlain by ſin and Satan, her old adverſaries; Then this *Virgo, Virago*, that all this while lay in expectation of the event, this martiall Maid, victorious Repentance comes in with her Reſerve, ſets upon the conque-

rors

rors with her freſh forces, reſcues the Queen, our ſoul, puts the great generall Satan to flight, and does impartial execution upon all his ſouldiers, which be our ſins.

Thus one grace begets another, by a ſupernatural generation, til they increaſe in number and meaſure, by the Divine inſpiration. Faith calls up repentance, repentance brings in pardon and forgiveneſſe, pardon leads in comfort, and thus, O my God, *Thy comforts delight my ſoul.*

4. When God, by the preaching of his law, hath broken up the fallow ground of our hearts, and by the applying of his Goſpel hath ſown the ſeed of eternal life in thoſe furrows, he lookes that we ſhould beſtow our labour in the watering of this plantation. The ground is his, for he made it: the ſeed is his, for he gives it: the harveſt is his, and he owns it. Yet ſuch is the bounty of his goodneſs, that he gives his farmers the fruits of it. The rent of that great Landlords glory being truly payed, the product is ours, even the comfort and ſalvation of our poor ſouls. All our pains is, but to hook up the weeds, that would hinder the growth of the corn, and dew the furrows with our tears, that it may ſpring up with chearfulneſs. But when the reaping-time comes, the whole crop is ours: and we come home ſinging with joy and thankfulneſs; *Thy comforts have delighted our ſouls.* When thoſe glorious reapers, the Angels ſhal bear up our ſouls to heaven, like ſheaves into the barn, we ſhal ſing *harveſt-home*, & glorifie our infinite good God, and our ſweet Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

To conclude, croſſes are but the purſuivants to fetch in repentance: and afflictions, but Gods letters, miſſive for mortification. When we are fallen into ſome

hainous

hainous tranſgreſſions, we may better ſay then in our other trouble, this will coſt hot water: For ſo it will indeed: it wil coſt the hot waters of our tears from our eyes, or it will coſt the warm blood of our hearts. Our godly ſorrow for our ſins, is like the Pool of *Betheſda:* when that Angel from heaven, gracious repentance hath troubled the waters, the lazarous ſoul does but ſtep into them, and is cured. For all our ſpiritual diſeaſes, this is the remedy, upon which we may ſafely write, *Probatum eſt.*

We have made our ſelves ſick by ſinning: God is the Phyſician, and he preſcribes: Affliction is the Apothecary, and he prepares: the Medicine is Repentance, and that infallibly cures. It is a broken heart that makes us whole. God loves a true heart, and a clean heart, and an honeſt heart, and an humble heart: yea and he loves a broken heart too. *The broken and contrite heart, O God thou wilt not deſpiſe.* It is true, that we are bound to love him with our whole heart: but if it be broken with penitential ſorrow for ſin, he wil heal the fracture, redintegrate the heart, and reaccept it wholly to himſelf. A contrite heart, broken in peices with ſorrow, and pickled up in briniſh tears, is a ſacrifice that God will not reject. Pſa. 54. 17

Whoſoever hath ſuch a heart, let him make much of it: It is a diſh for the king of kings. Sin, Repentance and Pardon, are like to the three vernall months of the yeer, *March*, *April*, and *May*. Sin comes in like *March* bluſtering, ſtormy, and full of bold violence. Repentance ſucceeds like *April*, ſhowring, weeping, and full of tears. Pardon follows like *May*, ſpringing, ſinging, ful of joys, and flowers. If our hands have been ful of

March,

March, with the tempests of unrighteousnesse: our eyes must be ful of *April*, with the sorrow of repentance: & then our hearts shal be ful of *May*, in the true joy of forgiveneſſe.

His *soul*; as there be no comforts like those of God; so there is nothing to which comforts are so welcom, as to the *soul*. The pleasure which the body takes, is but the body, yea scarce the very shadow of pleasure: the soul of pleasure is the pleasure of the soul. There bee many things pleasing to the body, wherein the sanctified soul takes no delight, especially in the day of trouble. In calamity, good nourishments are comfortable, good words are comfortable, good friends are comfortable, the Physician is comfortable, the Divine comfortable, a good spouse specially comfortable: but in respect of these *comforts*, which passe all understanding, we may say of the rest, as *Iob* did to his visitant friends, *Miserable comforters are ye all.* But blessed are the souls upon whom this Sun of comfort shineth: and happy are those showers of tears and sorrows, that shall be dryed up with such beams of comforts: and *blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.* 2 Cor. 1. 3. To whom, with the Son, and Holy Ghost, be all praise and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

FINIS.